

THE CHRISTIANS DEFENCE
against the Fears of DEATH.



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THE
CHRISTIAN'S DEFENCE
Against the
FEARS of DEATH.
WITH
Seasonable Directions
HOW TO
Prepare ourselves to DIE well.

Written Originally in *FRENCH*
By the late Reverend Divine of the Protestant
Church of PARIS,

CHAR. DRELINCOURT: 

Translated into *ENGLISH*
By *MARIUS D'ASSIGNT, B. D.*

The Twelfth Edition newly Corrected: With
an Account of the AUTHOR, and his LAST
MINUTES.

L O N D O N:
Printed for D. MIDWINTER, R. WILKIN,
A. BETTESWORTH, R. ROBINSON, J. PEELE,
B. MOTTE, and J. LACY.

M, DCC, XXVIII.

THE
CHRISTIAN DIFFERENCE



FEARS
Grateful Questions
HOW TO
Prepare ourselves to Die well

Written originally in French
By the late Rev. and Digne of the French
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CHARLES BRILLIACOURT

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THE
P R E F A C E
TO THE
Christian Reader.

THE true Character of Monsieur Drelin-court, the Author of these excellent Meditations, we find publish'd by Mr. Bayle in his great Historical Dictionary, &c. as followeth:

Charles Drelincourt, Minister of the Church of Paris, was born the 10th of July, 1595, at Sedan, where his Father was admitted to an honourable Office, being Secretary to Henry Robert de la Mark, Duke of Bouillon, and Sovereign Prince of Sedan; afterwards he was advanc'd to be Secretary to the chief Council of that City. His Son Charles was put to study Ethicks and Divinity, in that University; but was sent to Saumur to compleat his Philosophy under Mr. Duncan. He was ordain'd Minister in June 1618, and began the Exercise of his Function near Langres, continuing there until he was called to the Church of Paris in March 1620. He was married in the Year 1625, to an only Child of a rich Merchant of Paris, called Monsieur Balduck, who had newly embrac'd the Protestant Religion. Providence bless'd him and his Wife with a numerous Issue, he having had Sixteen Children by her; and gave no less Success to his Ministry. His Sermons were very powerful: But his chief Talent was in comforting the Sick, and performing all other necessary Offices of a careful Pastor. He was very faithful and zealous, in respect of his own Congregation and others; his Judgment being always desir'd in Matters of Moment. We cannot sufficiently commend the Services he has render'd to the Church of

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God by his many Writings he hath publish'd ; whether we examine his Books of Devotion or of Controversy. There is so much Piety contain'd in the former, and so many excellent Texts of Scripture explain'd in the latter, that many Religious Persons both have, and daily do find seasonable Consolations. That which he hath written against the Church of *Rome*, hath wonderfully strengthen'd the Protestant Professors. For by the Arguments that he brings, the Ignorant and Unlearned have been able to confound the Monks and Priests, and to maintain the Principles of their Religion against the subtlest Missionaries. So that his Writings have caus'd him to be esteem'd *the Scourge of the Roman Disputants*. Nevertheless, as he was belov'd of the contrary Party, so he was highly esteem'd by the greatest Lords of the reform'd Religion, as the Duke *de la Force*, the Mareschals of *Chatillon*, *de Gastion*, and *Turenne*, and by the Lady *de la Tremouille*, &c. He had also great Respect paid him by the frequent Visits of Ambassadors from several Foreign Princes and States. He was a Person who express'd a particular Esteem and Veneration for the Church of *England*, as appears by his Letters to Dr. *Durel*. He dy'd the 3^d of *November* 1669, in such an excellent and devout Disposition of Mind, as may be expected in a Person who was animated with an holy Zeal, and had with an unwearied Diligence consecrated all his Study and Labours to the Glory of God and the Service of his Church. He was more frequent in Prayer towards the Conclusion of his Life: And when he was private and alone, he never heard the Clock strike, but he fell upon his Knees in Prayer to God.

This is the approv'd Character publish'd of our eminent Divine, after a long Experience and Practice amongst departing Souls and in the Houses of Mourning, at the Request of some of his Congregation, who mightily approv'd of the proper and seasonal Arguments that he made use of to fortify

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tify dying Persons against the Apprehensions of Death; suitable to their Conditions and Temper, he publish'd this Book of Consolations. About Twenty Editions have been printed in France; and one at Avignon, in the Pope's Dominions, with a Suppression of the Reverend Author's Name. How many Impressions have been published in Holland, Germany and elsewhere, I cannot determine. We find it translated into several Languages, but was not in our Mother Tongue, until, at the Request of the Author's Son, now Dean of Armagh in Ireland, I translated it into English: What Reception it met with amongst us, let this Twelfth Impression declare. I shall therefore judge it needless, after so many publick Testimonies of an universal Approbation, amongst Christians of all Professions, to speak anything in Commendation of this Defence against the Fears of Death. How serviceable it may be to Divines in Funeral Sermons, in visiting the Sick, the Poor and Afflicted, and how proper to be left as Legacies to surviving Friends at Funerals, I leave to others to judge, who shall sincerely desire to promote the Salvation of Souls.

And now I cannot but take some Notice here of the high Esteem and Commendation that a late Apparition, too well attested to be slighted, hath given of this Book. An exact Account of it you have in the printed Relation hereunto prefix'd. To reject all Narratives of this kind as fictitious, argues, in my judgment, as great an Error, Weakness and Prejudice, as to believe all that is reported of Apparitions. This comes to us clothed with all the Appearance and Circumstances of Truth,

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*that may reasonably be expected in this Case. So that none but an unbelieving Sadducee or a prophane Atheist, will offer to question the Reality. To confirm the Possibility and Truth of some Apparitions, none can deny, that by this Means our Good God hath convey'd and confirm'd to us several of the Mysteries of our Holy Religion; as the Conception, Birth, Incarnation, Resurrection, and glorious Ascension of our Great Messiah, by the Apparitions of Angels. And how often those heavenly Spirits were formerly visible in human Shapes, for the Advantage, Information and Safeguard of the Pious, the Word of God sufficiently declares. Now, as we live in such an incredulous Age, that will not believe God, and his Divine Oracles, tho' attested by the working of Miracles, concerning the future State of the Righteous and Wicked, but requires a new Testimony and Evidence, as the Return of Souls from the Dead, to witness the Happiness of Heaven, the Torments of Hell, and the Immortality of the Soul: Who knows, but to render Men more inexcusable, God may condescend that a departed Soul, or its good Angel in its stead, may appear to declare these infallible and undoubted Truths to an unbelieving World? But we find by Experience, as in this Case, that this kind of Evidence is far more liable to Exceptions, to be contradicted and rejected, as uncertain and fabulous, and sooner than the sacred Methods that our Wise God hath taken to persuade Men to the Divine Doctrines of our Salvation: As Abraham declares in the Parable of the rich Glutton, condemned to the Flames of Hell, If they will not believe Moses and the Prophets; we may
with*

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with more Reason add, if they will not believe Christ, and his holy Apostles, and so many wonderful Miracles attesting God's Omnipotency, and Revelations from above, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the Dead.

I must here acquaint my Reader, That whereas in the former Impressions of this Book, some Errata have escap'd, whereby the Author's Sense and Meaning may not be so clearly express'd as in the Original: And whereas also upon some Subjects, our Reverend Author distates the Reader by too frequent Repetitions in his Prayers, containing Matters and Arguments of the foregoing Chapters: These and such trivial Objections have caused several Persons to find Fault not only with the Translation, but even the very Book it self. To remedy therefore any thing of this Nature, and to prevent all Complaints of this Kind, and that so excellent and useful a Treatise may appear in our own proper and natural Language, not differing in any thing material from the French Copy; but suited as much as conveniently it may be to the nicer Palates of our present Age; I have in this Edition taken the Pains to compare this Translation with a Book printed at Berlin, the Court of the King of Prussia, 1798. I have been in this more exact, and have alter'd some Words and Phrases, expressing more plainly the Author's Meaning, and in Terms more agreeable with our present familiar way of Speaking. Besides, in this Edition of Berlin, I have met with two or three Passages which are not in the former French Impressions, and which I judg'd not convenient to be omitted. Some of the Prayers that seem'd too prolix, I have

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abbreviated

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abbreviated, comprehending only the principal Matters. And that nothing may be wanting in this Edition, that might more contribute to the Reader's Satisfaction, I have here render'd in English the last remarkable Passages of this pious and excellent Minister of Christ, never before printed in our own Tongue, as we find them at the End of the aforementioned Book : That you may here at once, as in a Mirror, see the Behaviour, religious Speeches, Faith, Patience, and Resignation to the Will of God, of our Reverend Divine at his Decease, reduc'd into Practice, according to the excellent Advices and Consolations that he recommends to us, to arm ourselves against the Apprehensions and Approaches of Death.

I have no more to add; But I beseech our merciful and heavenly Father to grant us all the Grace, the like Faith, and Christian Resolution, that we may not fear Death nor its Consequences; but may be always ready prepared and provided to embrace it with Joy and Submission to the Pleasure of God and the Decrees of Heaven, whenever our Almighty Creator and Redeemer shall think fit to summon us, and take us to himself. Amen.

M. D.

THis Book in the Original hath been so well approv'd of by all Persons, tho' of different Judgments in Religion, that it hath been about twenty Times printed in *France*, besides what hath been done in *Holland*, and elsewhere, in other Languages : It is of very great use to Divines for Funeral Sermons; and is very fit to be given away by well-disposed Persons at Funerals, and of excellent use to every Christian Reader.

A
True RELATION
OF THE
APPARITION
OF ONE

Mrs. *VEAL*,

The next Day after her DEATH,

TO ONE

Mrs. *BARGRAVE*,

AT

CANTERBURY,

The 8th of *September* 1705.

Which APPARITION recommends the
Perusal of *DRELINCOURT's* Book
of *Consolations against the Fears of Death.*

The Twelfth EDITION.

THE RELATION
OF THE
APPARITION
OF ONE

Mrs. V. E. A. L.

The next Day after her DEATH.



Mrs. B. C. R. A. N. E.

CANTERBURY.

The 6th of September 1707.

Which APPARITION recommends the
Fidelity of DRELLINGCOURT'S Book
of Cogitations against the Fears of Death.

The Twelfth Edition.



T H E
P R E F A C E.

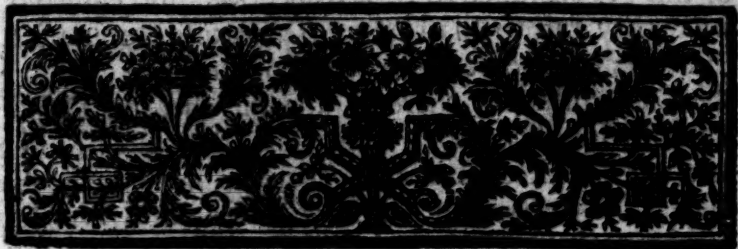


*HIS Relation is Matter of Fact, and attended with such Circumstances, as may induce any reasonable Man to believe it. It was sent by a Gentleman, a Justice of Peace at Maidstone in Kent, and a very intelligent Person, to his Friend in London, as it is here worded: Which Discourse is attested by a very sober and understanding Gentlewoman, a Kinswoman of the said Gentleman's, who lives in Canterbury, within a few Doors of the House in which the within nam'd Mrs. Bargrave lives; who believes his Kinswoman to be of so discerning a Spirit, as not to be put upon by any Fallacy; and who positively assured him, that the whole Matter, as it is related and laid down, is what is really true; and what she her self had in the same Words (as near as may be) from Mrs. Bargrave's own Mouth, who, she knows, had no Reason to invent and publish such a Story, or any Design to
forge*

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forge and tell a Lye, being a Woman of much Honesty and Virtue, and her whole Life a Course, as it were, of Piety. The Use which we ought to make of it, is, to consider, That there is a Life to come after this, and a just God, who will retribute to every one according to the Deeds done in the Body; and therefore to reflect upon our past Course of Life we have led in the World; that our Time is short and uncertain; and that if we would escape the Punishment of the Ungodly, and receive the Reward of the Righteous, which is the laying hold of Eternal Life, we ought for the Time to come, to turn to God by a speedy Repentance, ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well: to seek after God early, if happily he may be found of us, and lead such Lives for the future, as may be well pleasing in his Sight.





A
RELATION
OF THE
APPARITION
OF
Mrs. *VEAL*,

THIS Thing is so rare in all its Circumstances, and on so good Authority, that my Reading and Conversation has not given me any thing like it : It is fit to gratify the most ingenious and serious Enquirer. Mrs. *Bargrave* is the Person to whom Mrs. *Veal* appeared after her Death ; she is my intimate Friend, and I can avouch for her Reputation, for these last fifteen or sixteen Years, on my own Knowledge ; and I can confirm the good Character she had from her Youth, to the Time of my Acquaintance. Tho' since this Relation, she is calumniated by some People, that are Friends to the Brother of Mrs. *Veal* who appear'd ; who think the Relation
of

of this Appearance to be a Reflection, and endeavour what they can to blast Mrs. *Bargrave's* Reputation ; and to laugh the Story out of Countenance. But by the Circumstances thereof, and the chearful Disposition of Mrs. *Bargrave*, notwithstanding the ill Usage of a very wicked Husband, there is not ye the least Sign of Dejection in her Face ; nor did I ever hear her let fall a desponding or murmuring Expression ; nay, not when actually under her Husband's Barbarity ; which I have been Witness to, and several other Persons of undoubted Reputation.

Now you must know, that Mrs. *Veal* was a Maiden Gentlewoman of about Thirty Years of Age, and for some Years last past, had been troubled with Fits ; which were perceived coming on her, by her going off from her Discourse very abruptly, to some impertinence : She was maintain'd by an only Brother, and kept his House in *Dover*. She was a very pious Woman, and her Brother a very sober Man to all Appearance : But now he does all he can to null or quash the Story. Mrs. *Veal* was intimately acquainted with Mrs. *Bargrave* from her Childhood. Mrs. *Veal's* Circumstances were then mean ; her Father did not take Care of his Children as he ought, so that they were exposed to Hardships : And Mrs. *Bargrave* in those Days had as unkind a Father, tho' she wanted neither for Food nor Cloathing, whilst Mrs. *Veal* wanted for both : Infomuch that she would often say, Mrs. *Bargrave*, you are not only the best, but the only Friend I have in the World ; and no Circumstance of Life shall ever dissolve my Friendship. They would often condole each other's adverse Fortunes and read together *Drelincourt upon Death* ; and other good Books : And so like two Christian Friends, they comforted each other under their Sorrow.

Some time after, Mr. *Veal's* Friends got him a Place in the Custom-House at *Dover*, which occasioned Mrs. *Veal*, by little and little, to fall off from her Intimacy with Mrs. *Bargrave*, though there was
never



never any such thing as a Quarrel; but an Indifference came on by Degrees, till at last Mrs. *Bargrave* had not seen her in two Years and a half; though above a twelve-Month of the time, Mrs. *Bargrave* hath been absent from *Dover*, and this last half Year, has been in *Canterbury* about two Months of the time, dwelling in a House of her own.

In this House on the eighth of September, viz. 1705. she was sitting alone in the Forenoon, thinking over her unfortunate Life, and arguing her self into a due Resignation to Providence, tho' her Condition seem'd hard. And, said she, *I have been provided for hitherto, and doubt not but I shall be still; and am well satisfied, that my Afflictions shall end, when it is most fit for me:* And then took up her sewing-Work, which she had no sooner done, but she hears a knocking at the Door; she went to see who was there, and this proved to be Mrs. *Veal*, her old Friend, who was in a riding Habit: At that Moment of Time the Clock struck Twelve at Noon.

Madam, says Mrs. *Bargrave*, *I am surpris'd to see you, you have been so long a Stranger;* but told her, *she was glad to see her, and offer'd to salute her,* which Mrs. *Veal* complied with, till their Lips almost touch'd, and then Mrs. *Veal* drew her Hand cross her own Eyes, and said, *I am not very well,* and so wav'd it. She told Mrs. *Bargrave* she was going a Journey, and had a great Mind to see her first: But, says Mrs. *Bargrave*, "How came you to take a Journey alone? I am amazed at it, because I know you have a fond Brother." O! says Mrs. *Veal*, *I gave my Brother the Slip, and came away, because I had so great a Desire to see you before I took my Journey.* So Mrs. *Bargrave* went in with her, into another Room within the first, and Mrs. *Veal* sat her down in an Elbow-Chair, in which Mrs. *Bargrave* was sitting when she heard Mrs. *Veal* knock. Then says Mrs. *Veal*, "My dear Friend,
" I am

“ I am come to renew our old Friendship again, and
 “ beg your Pardon for my Breach of it, and if you
 “ can forgive me, you are the best of Women.
 “ O, says *Mrs. Bargrave*, don’t mention such a thing;
 “ I have not had an uneasy Thought about it, I can
 “ easily forgive it. What did you think of me, said
 “ *Mrs. Veal*? Says *Mrs. Bargrave*, I thought you
 “ were like the rest of the World, and that Prof-
 “ perity had made you forget yourself and me.”
 Then *Mrs. Veal* reminded *Mrs. Bargrave* of the
 many friendly Offices she did her in former Days,
 and much of the Conversation they had with each
 other in the times of their Adversity; what Books
 they read, and what Comfort in particular they re-
 ceiv’d from *Drelincourt’s Book of Death*, which
 was the best, she said, on that Subject, ever wrote.
 She also mention’d *Dr. Sherlock*, and two *Dutch*
 Books which were translated, wrote upon Death,
 and several others: But *Drelincourt*, she said, had the
 clearest Notions of Death, and of the future State,
 of any who have handled that Subject. Then she
 ask’d *Mrs. Bargrave*, whether she had *Drelincourt*;
 she said, Yes. Says *Mrs. Veal*, fetch it; and so *Mrs.*
Bargrave goes up Stairs, and brings it down. Says
Mrs. Veal, “ Dear *Mrs. Bargrave*, if the Eyes of
 “ our Faith were as open as the Eyes of our Bo-
 “ dy, we should see Numbers of Angels about us
 “ for our Guard. The Notions we have of Hea-
 “ ven now, are nothing like what it is, as *Dre-*
 “ *lincourt* says. Therefore be comforted under your
 “ Afflictions, and believe that the Almighty has a
 “ particular Regard to you; and that your Af-
 “ flictions are Marks of God’s Favour; and when
 “ they have done the Business they are sent for,
 “ they shall be remov’d from you. And believe
 “ me, my dear Friend, believe what I say to
 “ you, One Minute of future Happiness will infi-
 “ nitely reward you for all your Sufferings. For I
 “ can never believe (and claps her Hand upon
 “ her

her Knee with great Earnestness, which indeed ran through most of her Discourse) *that ever God will suffer you to spend all your Days in this afflicted State; But be assured, that your Afflictions shall leave you, or you them in a short time.* She spake in that pathetical and heavenly manner, that Mrs. Bargrave wept several times, she was so deeply affected with it.

Then Mrs. Veal mention'd Dr. Horneck's *Ascetick*, at the End of which he gives an Account of the Lives of the Primitive Christians. Their Pattern she recommended to our Imitation, and said, *Their Conversation was not like this of our Age. For now (says she) there is nothing but frothy, vain Discourse, which is far different from theirs. Theirs was to Edification, and to build one another up in Faith; so that they were not as we are, nor are we as they were; but, said she, we ought to do as they did. There was an hearty Friendship among them; but where is it now to be found?* Says Mrs. Bargrave, 'Tis hard indeed, to find a true Friend in these Days. Says Mrs. Veal, Mr. Norris has a fine Copy of Verses, call'd, *Friendship in Perfection*, which I wonderfully admire; have you seen the Book? says Mrs. Veal? No, says Mrs. Bargrave; but I have the Verses of my own writing out. Have you, says Mrs. Veal, then fetch them; which she did from above Stairs, and offer'd them to Mrs. Veal to read, who refus'd, and wav'd the thing, saying, *holding down her Head would make it ake*; and then desir'd Mrs. Bargrave to read them to her, which she did. As they were admiring Friendship, Mrs. Veal said, *Dear Mrs Bargrave, I shall love you for ever.* In these Verses there is twice used the Word *Elysian*. Ah! says Mrs. Veal, *these Poets have such Names for Heaven.* She would often draw her Hand cross her own Eyes, and say, *Mrs. Bargrave, don't you think I am mightily impair'd by my Fits?* No, says Mr. Bargrave, *I think you look as well as ever I knew you.*

After all this Discourse, which the Apparition put in much finer Words than Mrs. Bargrave said she could pretend to, and as much more than she can remember; (for it cannot be thought, that an Hour and three Quarters Conversation could all be retain'd, though the main of it she thinks she does :) She said to Mrs. Bargrave, *She would have her write a Letter to her Brother, and tell him, she would have him give Rings to such and such; and that there was a Purse of Gold in her Cabinet, and that she would have two Broad Pieces given to her Cousin Watson.*

Talking at this rate, Mrs. Bargrave thought that a Fit was coming upon her, and so plac'd her self in a Chair just before her Knees, to keep her from falling to the Ground, if her Fits should occasion it: For the Elbow Chair, she thought, would keep her from falling on either Side. And to divert Mrs. Veal, as she thought, took hold of her Gown-Sleeve several times, and commended it. Mrs. Veal told her, it was a scower'd Silk, and newly made up. But for all this, Mrs. Veal persisted in her Request, and told Mrs. Bargrave, she must not deny her: And she would have her tell her Brother all their Conversation when she had Opportunity. Dear Mrs. Veal, says Mrs. Bargrave, *This seems so impertinent, that I cannot tell how to comply with it; and what a mortifying Story will our Conversation be to a young Gentleman?* Why, says Mrs. Bargrave, 'tis much better, methinks, to do it your self. No, says Mrs. Veal, *tho' it seems impertinent to you now, you will see more Reason for it hereafter.* Mrs. Bargrave then, to satisfy her Importunity, was going to fetch a Pen and Ink; but Mrs. Veal said, *Let it alone now, and do it when I am gone; but you must be sure to do it:* Which was one of the last Things she enjoyn'd her at parting, and so she promis'd her.

Then Mrs. Veal ask'd for Mrs. Bargrave's Daughter; She said, she was not at home; but if you have a mind to see her, says Mrs. Bargrave, I'll send for
for

for her. *Do*, says Mrs. *Veal*. On which she left her, and went to a Neighbour's to see for her; and by the time Mrs. *Bargrave* was returning, Mrs. *Veal* was got without the Door in the Street, in the Face of the *Beast-Market*, on a *Saturday* (which is *Market-Day*) and stood ready to part, as soon as Mrs. *Bargrave* came to her. She ask'd her, Why she was in such haste? She said, *she must be going, tho' perhaps she might not go her Journey till Monday*. And told Mrs. *Bargrave*, *she hoped she should see her again at her Cousin Watson's before she went whither she was going*. Then she said, *she would take her leave of her, and walk'd from Mrs. Bargrave in her View, till a Turning interrupted the Sight of her, which was three quarters after one in the Afternoon*.

Mrs. *Veal* died the 7th of *September* at twelve a Clock at Noon of her Fits, and had not above four Hours Senses before her Death, in which time she receiv'd the Sacrament. The next Day after Mrs. *Veal's* appearing, being *Sunday*, Mrs. *Bargrave* was mightily indisposed with a Cold and a sore Throat, that she could not go out that Day; but on *Monday* Morning she sends a Person to Captain *Watson's* to know if Mrs. *Veal* was there. They wonder'd at Mrs. *Bargrave's* Enquiry; and sent her Word that she was not there, nor was expected. At this Answer Mrs. *Bargrave* told the Maid, she had certainly mistook the Name, or made some Blunder. And though she was ill, she put on her Hood, and went her self to Captain *Watson's*, though she knew none of the Family, to see if Mrs. *Veal* was there or not. They said, they wonder'd at her asking, for that she had not been in Town; they were sure, if she had, she would have been there. Says Mrs. *Bargrave*, *I am sure she was with me on Saturday almost two Hours*. They said, it was impossible, for they must have seen her if she had. In comes Captain *Watson*, while they were in Dispute, and said, that Mrs. *Veal* was certainly dead, and her Escutcheons were making.

ing. This strangely surprized Mrs. *Bargrave*, when she sent to the Person immediately who had the Care of them, and found it true. Then she related the whole Story to Captain *Watson's* Family, and what Gown she had on, and how striped; and that Mrs. *Veal* told her it was scower'd. Then Mrs. *Watson* cried out, *You have seen her indeed; for none knew but Mrs. Veal and my self that the Gown was scower'd.* And Mrs. *Watson* own'd, that she describ'd the Gown exactly: *For, said she, I help'd her to make it up.* This Mrs. *Watson* blaz'd all about the Town, and avouch'd the Demonstration of the Truth of Mrs. *Bargrave's* seeing Mrs. *Veal's* Apparition. And Captain *Watson* carry'd two Gentlemen immediately to Mrs. *Bargrave's* House, to hear the Relation from her own Mouth. And when it spread so fast, that Gentlemen and Persons of Quality, the Judicious and Sceptical Part of the World, flock'd in upon her, it, at best, became such a Task, that she was forc'd to go out of the way. For they were, in general, extremely satisfy'd of the Truth of the Thing; and plainly saw, that Mrs. *Bargrave* was no Hypochondriack; for she always appears with such a chearful Air, and pleasing Mien, that she has gain'd the Favour and Esteem of all the Gentry: And 'tis thought a great Favour if they can but get the Relation from her own Mouth. I should have told you before, that Mrs. *Veal* told Mrs. *Bargrave*, that her Sister and Brother-in-law were just come down from *London* to see her. Says Mrs. *Bargrave*, *How came you to order Matters so strangely?* *It could not be help'd,* said Mrs. *Veal*. And her Brother and Sister did come to see her, and enter'd the Town of *Dover* just as Mrs. *Veal* was expiring. Mrs. *Bargrave* ask'd her, Whether she would drink some Tea? Says Mrs. *Veal*, *I don't care if I do; but I'll warrant you this mad Fellow* (meaning Mrs. *Bargrave's* Husband) *has broke all*
your

your Trinkets. But, says Mrs *Bargrave*, *I'll get something to drink in for all that*; but Mrs. *Veal* wav'd it, and said, *It is no Matter, let it alone*; and so it passed.

All the Time I sat with Mrs. *Bargrave*, which was some Hours, she recollected fresh Sayings of Mrs. *Veal*. And one material Thing more she told Mrs. *Bargrave*, that old Mr. *Breton* allow'd Mrs. *Veal* ten Pounds a Year; which was a Secret, and unknown to Mrs. *Bargrave* till Mrs. *Veal* told it her.

Mrs. *Bargrave* never varies in her Story; which puzzles those who doubt of the Truth, or are unwilling to believe it. A Servant in the Neighbour's Yard adjoining to Mrs. *Bargrave*'s House heard her talking to some Body an Hour of the Time Mrs. *Veal* was with her. Mrs. *Bargrave* went out to her next Neighbour's the very Moment she parted with Mrs. *Veal*, and told her what ravishing Conversation she had with an old Friend, and told the whole of it. *Drelincourt's Book of DEATH* is, since this happen'd, bought up strangely. And it is to be observ'd, that notwithstanding all the Trouble and Fatigue Mrs. *Bargrave* has undergone upon this Account, she never took the Value of a Farthing, nor suffered her Daughter to take any thing of any Body; and therefore can have no Interest in telling the Story.

But Mr. *Veal* does what he can to stifle the Matter, and said, he would see Mrs. *Bargrave*; but yet it is certain Matter of Fact, that he has been at Captain *Watson's* since the Death of his Sister, and yet never went near Mrs. *Bargrave*; and some of his Friends report her to be a Lyar, and that she knew of Mr. *Breton's* ten Pounds a Year. But the Person who pretends to say so, has the Reputation of a notorious Lyar, among Persons whom I know to be of undoubted Repute. Now Mr.

Veal is more of a Gentleman than to say, she Lies; but says, a bad Husband has craz'd her. But she needs only to present her self, and it will effectually confute that Pretence. Mr. *Veal* says, he ask'd his Sister on her Death-Bed, Whether she had a mind to dispose of any Thing? And she said, No. Now, that the Things which Mrs. *Veal's* Apparition would have dispos'd of, were so trifling, and nothing of Justice aim'd at in their Disposal, that the Design of it appears to me to be only in order to make Mrs. *Bargrave* so to demonstrate the Truth of her Appearance, as to satisfy the World of the Reality thereof, as to what she had seen and heard; and to secure her Reputation among the reasonable and understanding Part of Mankind. And then again, Mr. *Veal* owns that there was a Purse of Gold; but it was not found in her Cabinet, but in a Comb-Box. This looks improbable, for that Mrs. *Watson* own'd, that Mrs. *Veal* was so very careful of the Key of her Cabinet, that she would trust no Body with it. And if so, no doubt, she would not trust her Gold out of it. And Mrs. *Veal's* often drawing her Hand over her Eyes, and asking Mrs. *Bargrave*, Whether her Fits had not impair'd her? looks to me, as if she did it on purpose to remind Mrs. *Bargrave* of her Fits; to prepare her not to think it strange that she should put her upon writing to her Brother, to dispose of Rings and Gold, which look'd so much like a dying Person's Request; and it took accordingly with Mrs. *Bargrave*, as the Effect of her Fits coming upon her; and was one of the many Instances of her wonderful Love to her, and Care of her, that she should not be affrighted; which indeed appears in her whole Management, particularly, in her coming to her in the Day-time; waving the Salutation, and when she was alone; and then the manner of her parting, to prevent a second Attempt to salute her.

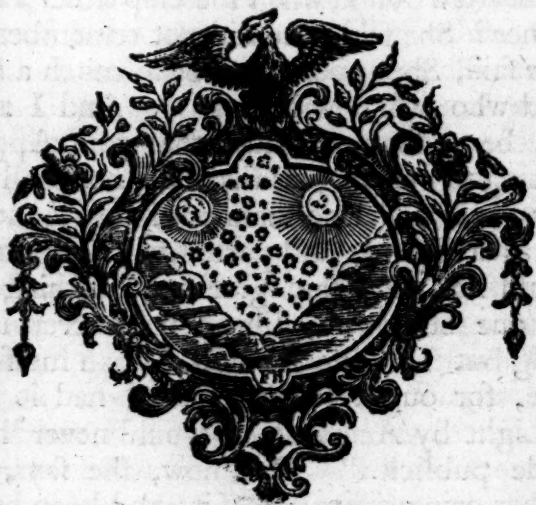
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Now, why Mr. *Veal* should think this Relation a Reflection (as it is plain he does, by his endeavouring to stifle it) I cannot imagine; because the Generality believe her to be a good Spirit, her Discourse was so heavenly. Her two great Errands were to comfort Mrs. *Bargrave* in her Affliction, and to ask her Forgiveness for her Breach of Friendship, and with a pious Discourse to encourage her. So that, after all, to suppose that Mrs. *Bargrave* could hatch such an Invention as this from *Friday* Noon, till *Saturday* Noon (supposing that she knew of Mrs. *Veal*'s Death the very first Moment) without jumbling Circumstances, and without any Interest too; she must be more witty, fortunate, and wicked too, than any indifferent Person, I dare say, will allow. I ask'd Mrs. *Bargrave* several times, If she was sure she felt the Gown? She answer'd modestly, " If my Senses be to be relied on, I am sure of it. " I ask'd her, If she heard a Sound when she clap'd her Hand upon her Knee? She said, she did not remember she did; and she said, She appear'd to be as much a Substance as I did who talk'd with her. " And I may, said she, be as soon persuaded that your Apparition is talking to me now, as that I did not really see her: " For I was under no manner of Fear, and receiv'd her as a Friend, and parted with her as such. I would not, says she, give one Farthing to make any one believe it; I have no Interest in it; nothing but Trouble is entail'd upon me for a long time, for ought I know: And had it not come to Light by Accident, it would never have been made publick. " But now, she says, she will make her own private Use of it, and keep her self out of the way as much as she can; and so she has done since. She says, " She had a Gentleman who came thirty Miles to her to hear the Relation; and that she had told it to a Room full of People at a time. " Several particular Gentlemen have had the Story from Mrs. *Bargrave*'s own Mouth.

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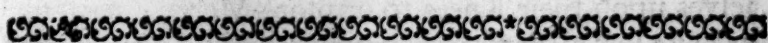
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This Thing has very much affected me; and I am as well satisfy'd, as I am of the best grounded Matter of Fact. And why we should dispute Matter of Fact, because we cannot solve Things of which we can have no certain or demonstrative Notions, seems strange to me. Mrs. *Bargrave's* Authority and Sincerity alone, would have been undoubted in any other Case.





THE
CHRISTIAN'S
CONSOLATIONS
AGAINST THE
Fears of DEATH.



CHAP. I.

*That there is nothing more dreadful than Death,
to such as have no Hope in God.*



AN inspired Pen styles Death very significantly, *The King of Terrors*; that is to say, the most terrible of all other things. For there is nothing that we can imagine in the World more dreadful and more frightful than Death. 'Tis possible to decline the Edge of drawn Swords, to close the Lion's Jaws, to quench the Fire's Fury; but when Death shoots its poison'd Arrows, when it opens its infernal Pit, and when it sends forth its devouring Flames, 'tis altogether impossible to secure our selves; impossible 'tis to guard our selves from its merciless Fury. There is an infinite Number of warlike Inventions, by which we commonly defeat the evil Designs of the most powerful and dreadful Enemies; there is no Stratagem of the most renowned General, no Fortifications ever so regular and artificial, nor Army ever so victorious,
that

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that can retard but for a Moment the Approaches of Death, this last Enemy. In the twinkling of an Eye it flies through the strongest Bulwarks, the deepest Walls, and the most prodigious Towers. It leaps over the largest Ditches, the highest Castles, and the most inaccessible Rocks. It blows down the strongest Barricadoes, and laughs at all our military Trenches ; every where it finds the Weakness of our Armour, and through the best temper'd Breast-Plates it strikes the proudest Hearts. In the darkest Dungeon it comes to us, and snatches us out of the Hands of our most trusty and watchful Guards. In a Word, Nature and Art can furnish us with nothing able to protect us from Death's cruel and insatiable Hands.

There is none so barbarous, but is sometimes overcome by the Prayers and Tears of such as cast themselves upon their Knees to implore Mercy ; nay, such as have lost all Sense of Humanity and Goodness, commonly spare in their Rage the weakest Age and Sex. But unmerciful Death hath no more Regard of such as humble themselves, than of others that resist and defie her. It takes no notice of Infants Tears and Cries ; it plucks them from the Breasts of their tender-hearted Mothers, and crushes them in pieces before their Eyes. It scorns the Lamentations of dainty Dames, and delights to trample upon their most ravishing Beauties. It stops its Ears to the Requests of trembling old Age, and casts to the Ground the grey Heads as so many wither'd Oaks.

At a Battle, when Princes and Generals of the Enemy's Army are taken Prisoners, they are not treated as common Soldiers ; but unmerciful Death treads under Feet as audaciously the Subject as the Prince, the Servant as the Master, the Noble and the Vassal, the begging *Lazarus* and the rich *Abraham* together. It blows out with the same Blast, the most glorious Luminaries, and the most loathsome Lamps. It hath no more Respect for the Crowns of Kings, the Pope's Mitre, and the Cardinal's Cap, than for the Shepherd's Crook,



against the Fears of DEATH. 3

Crook, or the Slave's Chains. It heaps them together, shuts them in the same Dungeon, and in the same Mortar pounds them to Powder.

There is no War tho' ever so furious and bloody, but is interrupted with some Days, or at least, some Hours of Cessation and Truce: Nay, the most inhuman Minds are at last tir'd with bloody Conquests; but insatiable Death never saith, 'tis enough. At every Hour and Moment it cuts down whole Nations and Kindreds. The Flesh of all the Animals that have liv'd and died since the Creation of the World, hath not been able to glut this devouring Monster.

All Warfare is doubtful, he that wins the Victory to Day, may soon after be put to flight. He that rides at present in a triumphant Chariot, may become the Footstool of his Enemy. But Death is always victorious; it triumphs with an insufferable Insolence over all the Kings and Nations of the Earth; it never returns to its Den but loaden with Spoils, and glutted with Blood. The strongest *Sampsons*, and the most victorious *Davids*, who have torn in Pieces, and overcome Lions, Bears, and cut off the Heads of Giants, have at last yielded themselves, and been cut off by Death. The great *Alexander*, and the triumphing *Cæsars*, who have made all the World to tremble before them, and conquer'd most Part of the habitable Earth, could never find any thing that might protect them from Death's Power. When magnificent Statues and state-ly Trophies were rais'd to their Honour, Death laugh'd at their Vanity, and made Sport with their Persons. The rich Marbles, where so many proud Titles are engraven, cover nothing but a little rotten Flesh, and a few Bones, which Death hath broken and reduc'd to Ashes.

We read in the Revelation of the Prophet *Daniel*, that King *Nebuchadnezzar* saw in a Dream a large Statue of Gold, both glorious and terrible; *its Head was of pure Gold, its Breast and Arms were of Silver, its Belly and Thighs of Brass, its Legs of Iron, and its Feet were partly of Clay, and partly of Iron.* As the Prince
was

was beholding it with Astonishment, a little Stone cut out of a Mountain, without Hands, was roll'd against the Feet of this prodigious Statue, and broke it all to Pieces; not only the Clay and Iron were broken, but also the Gold, the Silver, and the Brass; all became as the Chaff which the Wind blows to and fro. This great Image represents the four universal Monarchies of the World: That of *Babylon*, of the *Persians* and *Medes*, of the *Greeks*, and that of the *Romans*. It represents also the Vanity and Inconstancy of all Things under the Sun. For what is the Pomp, the Glory, the Strength and Dignities of this World, but as a Smoak driven with the Wind, and a Vapour that soon vanishes away? All is like a Shadow that flies from us, or like a Dream that disappears in an Instant. Man created in the Image of God, at his first Appearance, seems to be very glorious for a while, and becomes terrible. But as soon as Death strikes at his earthly Part, and begins to break his Flesh and Bones, all the Glory, Pomp, Power, and Magnificence of the richest, of the most terrible and victorious Monarchs are chang'd into a loathsome Smell, into contemptible Dust, and reduc'd to nothing; *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.*

Since therefore Death is so impartial as to spare none, and its Power so great, that none can escape or resist it, 'tis no Wonder if it is become so terrible, and fills with Fear, Grief, and Despair, the Minds of all Mortals who have not settled their Faith and Assurance upon God. For there is no condemned Prisoner but trembles when he beholds the Scaffold erecting, upon which he is design'd to be broken upon a Wheel, or when he spies in the Fire, Irons with which he is to be pinch'd to Death.

In the midst of a sumptuous Feast, King *Belshazzar* saw the Fingers of a Man's Hand writing these Words upon the Wall of his Palace, *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*, which the Prophet *Daniel* hath thus interpreted,
Mene,

against the Fears of DEATH. 5

Mene, God hath numbred thy Kingdom, and finish'd it ; Tekel, thou art weigh'd in the Balance, and art found wanting ; Perez or Upbarsin, Thy Kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians. As soon as this great Monarch had cast his Eyes upon this miraculous Writing, it is said, that his Countenance was chang'd, and his Thoughts troubled him, so that the Joints of his Loins were loos'd, and his Knees smote one against another. Certainly, the proud Worldling has a greater Cause to be dismay'd in the midst of his Glory and Pleasures, when he may perceive Death writing upon every Wall of his House in visible Characters, and printing upon his Forehead, that *God hath numbred his Days,* and this in which he now breaths, shall be soon follow'd by an eternal Night ; that *God hath weigh'd him in the Balance of his Justice, and found him as light as the Wind ;* and that the Almighty Creator, unto whom Vengeance belongs, will soon divest him of all his Glory and Riches, to cloath therewith his Enemies. What Comforts can be found for the wretched Sinners, who do not only understand their final Sentence, but also hear the thundring Voice of the great Judge of the World exasperated by their Impieties ? They may now perceive Hell prepared to swallow them up, and the fiery Chains of that doleful Prison ready to embrace them. They may at present feel the Hands of the Executioner of divine Justice, that seizeth upon them already, and see themselves before stretch'd and tortur'd in that Place, where there shall be nothing but weeping and horrible gnashing of Teeth. At present they may feel the fierce Approaches of that Fire and Brimstone which is the second Death ; for it may justly be said of these wretched Varlets, *That Hell comes to them before they go to Hell ;* and that in this Life they have a Pre-sentiment of the grievous Pangs of their future Torments. Therefore some of them in Despair offer Violence to themselves, and commit an horrid Murder upon their own Persons, as if they were afraid not to die by a Hand wicked enough. The Expectation
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of

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of Death to them, is more sufferable than Death itself, and they had rather cast themselves into the bottomless Pit of Hell, than endure the Apprehensions and Fears of Hell in their guilty Consciences; and, to be delivered of the Flashes of Hell-fire, and mount up their Souls in this Life, they cast themselves in a brutish Manner into that unquenchable Burning.

That which is most terrible, is, that the horrid and insufferable Fears that seize upon the Wicked, are not short and transitory; for as a Criminal that knows there is a Sentence of Death pronounc'd against him, continually thinks upon those Torments that are preparing for him, as soon as he hears the Door unlocking, or a Fly buzzing about his Ears, he imagines that some are entring to drag him from his Prison to Execution. In some Sense, he desires what he apprehends, and hastens the Approaches of that, which he wishes, and cannot avoid. Thus desperate Sinners, that know there is a Sentence of eternal Death proclaim'd against them in the Court of the King of Kings, and that from this Sentence there is no Appeal nor Escape, must needs be in continual Fears. Such foresee the fearful Image of Death that disturbs their Quiet, and, as St. Paul expresseth himself, *Through Fear of Death, they are all their Life-time subject to Bondage, Heb. ii. 15.* That is, they are like so many wretched Slaves that daily tremble under the inhuman Power of a merciless Tyrant.

I know that there be some Atheists who talk of Death with Contempt or Scorn, and who make an open Profession of braving Death without the least Sense of Fear; nevertheless, they feel in their Souls some secret Thorns, with which Death often gauls them; some Fears and Apprehensions, with which it tortures and disquiets them when they dream least of it. It is true, they, for the most part, boast of not fearing the Approaches of Death, and laugh at it when they imagine that it is at a Distance from them; but

against the Fears of DEATH. 7

but these are they who are most apt to tremble at the near and grim Countenance of Death, and soonest discover their Weakness and Despair.

If there be any that seem to laugh at Death, their Laughter is only an Appearance upon the Lips. They are like a Child newly born, that seems to smile when 'tis inwardly tormented in the Bowels ; or like those that eat of the famous Herb mentioned by the Herbalists, which causeth a pleasant Laughter to appear upon the Lips of such, into whose noble Parts it conveys a mortal Poyson that kills them.

There be some, I confess, that die without any Concern ; but these are either brutish or senseless Persons, much like unto a sleeping Drunkard, who may be cast down a Precipice, without any Knowledge or Foresight of the Danger ; or they be pleasant Mockers, who are like the foolish Criminals that go merrily to the Gallows ; or they be such as are full of Rage and fury, whom I may very well compare to an enraged wild Boar, that runs himself into the Huntsman's Snare: Such Monsters of Men deserve not to be reckoned amongst rational and understanding Creatures.

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## C H A P. II.

*That in all the Heathen Philosophy, there is no solid and true Comfort against the Fears and Apprehensions of Death.*

**T**Here are certain Empyricks that seem at the first Discourse to be very well skilled in their Art, that talk of Diseases, and of their Causes most learnedly and acutely ; and nevertheless, in their Practice they

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they are both unhappy and ignorant. Their unseasonable Learning disturbs the Patient more than their Physick eases him; and increases the Sufferings of the languishing Body. These kind of Physicians very well describe to us, in this Particular, the Properties of the Heathen Philosophers. For when they represent the Calamities of our human Condition, they sharpen their Wits, and discover all their Skill and Rhetorick. Some of them laugh ingeniously at our Miseries, others artificially weep to behold them. But in all their Writings and tragick Expressions, we find not any solid and sincere Comforts to strengthen us against the Apprehensions of Death. Therefore their contemptible and vain Fancies oblige us to tell them, as *Job* his troublesome Friends, *Your Remembrances are like unto Ashes, your Bodies to Bodies of Clay, Job xiii.* 'Tis true, some of those learned Philosophers have very well spoken, that we begin to die as soon as we begin to breathe, that our Life is like unto a Candle that lives by its Consumption, whereof the Flame devours and consumes it. For the natural Heat that entertains our Life, insensibly undermines it; 'tis that which spends our radical Moisture, that yields the same Benefits to our Life, as Oil to a Lamp, or Wax to a Taper.

Others have as well said, that our present Life is but a swift Race from one Mother to another. They meant from the Womb of our Mothers that brought us into the World, into the Womb and Bosom of the Earth that will receive us at last. For as soon as we are born, we run a swift Race towards our Grave. At that Instant when we fly from Death, we approach insensibly towards it, and, contrary to our Intention, we cast ourselves into its Embraces. Some of the same School have compar'd Man to a Bubble upon the Water, that rises and swells, and immediately decreases and breaks. Others make him like unto the waterish Bottles of divers Colours, that Children blow with their Breath, and destroy with the same. In Truth, all Man's Beau-

## against the Fears of DEATH. 9

ty is but a vain Appearance that vanishes away in an Instant, *Isa. xl. All Flesh is like Grass, and all the Glory of Man like the Flower in the Field,* 1 Pet. i.

One of these great Philosophers being ask'd, What the Life of Man was? answer'd never a Word; because such a Question deserv'd none, or rather because he would imitate the Custom of his Age, of speaking by guesses, and symbolick Representations. For that Purpose he enter'd into a Chamber, and pass'd out again at the same Instant, to signify to his Disciples that question'd him, how that Man's Life is but an Entrance in, and an Egress out of the World; the one succeeds immediately the other.

Another of the same Sect walk'd in a Bravado two or three Turns, and then shrunk into a Pit, to shew that our Life is but a kind of Masquerade, a vain Appearance, that soon vanishes: When Men have well admir'd themselves in their Splendor, and have drawn to them the Looks and Esteem of the World, Death surprizes them, and spoils all their Lustre, and covers their borrow'd Glory in a mournful Grave. 'Tis with us as with Actors in a Comedy, the one represents a King, the other an Emperor; the one a Counsellor, the other a Minister of State; but when the Comedy is ended, and the Garments chang'd, you know not which is which. We are like Counters upon a Table, some signify Units, others Tens, others Hundreds, and others Thousands and Millions; but when they are shuffled together and put again into the Purse, the vast Difference appears no more. This is a lively Image of all Mankind; for in this Life some appear upon a Throne, others are seated upon a Dunghil; some flourish in Golden and Silken Attire, others are cloath'd with Nakedness; some command as Princees, others submit as Galley-Slaves; some are fed with exquisite Dainties, others must be content with the Bread of Affliction. But when Death has cast them all into their Graves together, then they appear without any Distinction.



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All these witty Expressions, and others of the like Nature, are pleasant and true, they teach well, and flatter the Fancy, but they afford no real Comforts. Therefore to all these learned Doctors, we may say as *Job* by the way of Reproach to his Friends that added Sorrow to his Affliction, *You are all Physicians of no Value, How then comfort ye me in vain?* *Job* xiii. 9. When a Patient is afflicted with the Tortures of an unmerciful Gout, or of the Stone in the Kidneys, that forceth from him every Moment most grievous Sighs and Groans; if any should offer to paint before him his Looks and Grimaces, or should counterfeit them ingeniously in his Presence, he would bring him little Ease to his Torments, but rather Increase to his Vexation and Trouble. The most beautiful Flower also can give no Delight to such as are rack'd in the Executioner's Hands, or ty'd to four Horses that are ready to tear him to Pieces. Thus 'tis with the most eloquent and florid Discourse; it can bring no Comfort to a Soul that is departing; *David's* Harp alone can drive away the evil Spirits, and appease the Troubles of a wounded Conscience.

But some may imagine in this general Survey of the wise Follies and Vanity of the Heathen Philosophers, I should except the *Stoicks*; I confess, in this Particular, they express more Gravity, but they proceed with no better Success; nay, when I have well consider'd them, I find them to be far more insufferable, and more impertinent than the rest. For besides that they treat of the Immortality of the Soul in a very doubtful and inconsistent manner; the pretended Comforts that they offer, render Death more dreadful.

They tell us, That Death is the End and Centre where all human Afflictions and Miseries cease; therefore 'tis rather to be desir'd, than avoided or fear'd. They might have some colourable Reason for this Conclusion, if they did but discover beyond the Grave an Happiness which they might now expect and hope; for Death assures them of no other Comfort, but only

to put a Period to all the Miseries of this wretched Life. Therefore such kind of Discourses are not properly Comforts, and the Resolution that they beget in us, is but a silly Passion, much like that of a Criminal upon the Rack, who impatiently wishes for Death, that he might be delivered from the cruel Hands of the Executioners; and longs to be out of these Torments, to get on the Scaffold where he is to be broken upon the Wheel: O miserable Wretch! the Change of Tortures will bring no Ease to thy Pains. If thou canst not endure patiently the Ropes that unjoint thy Limbs, how wilt thou suffer the Bar of Iron that shall crack all thy Bones in Pieces? O blind Philosopher! If thou canst not bear the Miseries of this Life, how wilt thou endure the Agonies of Death?

Moreover they tell us, That the most cruel and painful Death is a noble Occasion to exercise our Virtue, and to cause our Constancy and Resolution to appear with Admiration. This Discourse seems to be plausible, but in Reality 'tis nothing but Wind; for what availeth this apparent Virtue? it hinders us not from falling into the deepest Abyss of Torment and Misery, but perishes and dies with its Idolaters. Therefore, such as have most admir'd it, have at last acknowledg'd it to be but a Shadow; witness that famous and worthy General who fancied that his Virtue would procure to him the Victory over all the Enemies of the Commonwealth, in whose Quarrel he took up Arms. When the Battle was lost, and all his ambitious Hopes had deceived him, being ready to stab himself with his own Sword, he cried out, *Oh miserable Virtue! what art thou, but a vain unprofitable Word, a Name without a Body!* He thus exclaim'd against his Virtue, that he had formerly ador'd, because it could yield him no Comfort in the Day of his Distress, nor free him from falling into utter Despair.

The most ordinary and useful Comforts they commonly bring, are these: That Death is inevitable; that we all enter into the World upon Condition to

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go out; that we have as much Cause to be afflicted with the Day of our Birth, as with the Day of our Death; that Humanity and Immortality are not consistent; that Death is a Tribute we all owe to Nature; that the Kings and greatest Monarchs are forced to pay it, as well as the meanest Subjects, and that this is such an universal Law, that it admits of no Exception.

But these kinds of Comforts increase our Trouble, and add to our Affliction. I have therefore good Reason to speak to these grave Philosophers in *Job's* Language to his troublesome Friends, *Miserable Comforters are ye all*. For in Truth, they don't only search the Wound to the Quick, without any Application of an healing Plaister, but they also tear and widen it, inflame and render it far more grievous. When we are in Hopes of seeing an End to our Calamities, our Mind is comforted, and arms itself with Constancy and a patient Resolution; but when we see ourselves cast into an Abyss of Evil, and that no Hopes appear of getting out, we are then overwhelm'd with Grief and Despair. 'Tis a lamentable Thing to be born to die, but 'tis far more lamentable and grievous to know that Death is not to be avoided, that all the Treasures of the World cannot free us from it. For his Affliction is the greatest whose Misery cannot be cured.

This also is a false and deceitful Maxim, that the Comfort of the Miserable is to have Companions in Misery. Tho' many Thousand drink together of the Waters of *Marah*, they seem no less bitter. And altho' thou shouldst be burnt in a Fire where many are consum'd, thou shalt not find there a more easy Abode. Thy Neighbour's Grief does not lessen thy Affliction; their Sickness cannot restore to thee Health, nor their Death comfort thee against the Approaches of thine own. On the contrary, if thou hast any Sense of Humanity, thou wilt weep for their Misery and thine together. 'Tis that which great *Xerxes*, King of *Persia*, practis'd; for upon Review of his numerous



merous Army, in which there were 1100000 Men, he considering that within an Hundred Years so many brave Captains and Soldiers would be rotting in their Graves, was moved with Compassion and wept. I mention not here the brutish and foolish Opinion of such as imagine that Man's Soul is mortal, and perishes with the Body. This Consideration brings no Comfort, but casts us into an irrecoverable Despair. For besides the Torments of Hell-fire, there is nothing that can be imagin'd more dreadful than a Reduction to a Non-Entity.

'Tis also needless to mention the *Platonists*, who have discoursed of the Soul's Immortality, and of its Blessedness after this Life. They imagine themselves very acute and subtile; but their Discourses of this Matter are so gross and extravagant, that instead of persuading the Truth, they expose it to Scorn and Contempt. Let their fond and imaginary Descriptions of the *Elysian* Fields be Witnesses. For whatsoever they have invented of this kind, hath been reckon'd amongst the Fables and poetical Fictions. Those chimerical Gardens and Ground, contain nothing like to the Divine Excellencies and unspeakable Pleasures of the Paradise of God.

In a Word, seek amongst the rarest and most precious Treasures of Wit and Learning of the Heathen Antiquity; turn over the Writings of the most eloquent Orators, of the subtilest Philosophers, of the most famous Poets; examine the Secrets of the most experienced Physicians, consider their Practice, and all the Remedies they prescribe to the Soul, and you shall find them too unskilful to perform the least Cure. They do but charm and flatter the Disease; they harden us against Evil; they furnish us with a good Exterior, and teach us to bear a good Mien; but they have no real Antidote against the Venom, that kills the Principle of Life, nor Remedy that reaches to the Heart: And as Torrents, that dry up in the hottest Seasons, such Consolations that flow

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not from the Fountain of Life, vanish away without effect, and dry up to nothing, when a deep Sorrow, Fear and Affliction seize upon a sinful Soul.

It seems the Compilers of the Heathen Religion were sensible of this Truth. For they dedicated Temples, and erected Altars to all manner of Gods and Goddeses; not only to Virtues and Health, but also to Vices and Diseases, to Fear, Cowardice, Anger, the Fever, the Pestilence, and an infinite more; but they left Death out of their Devotions. This is an open Declaration, that they knew not how to strike Acquaintance with Death, and win its Esteem and Favour. They had no Sacrifices nor Incense that could allay its Fury; they look'd upon it as their most inhuman and irreconcilable Enemy. The very Name of Death terrify'd them; therefore 'twas one of their most unfortunate Omens. *Adrian* the Emperor is Witness of what I say: He was one of the greatest Princes in former Ages; he made most Part of the habitable World yield to his Sceptre, and put to Death an infinite Number of Men; but at last he trembled, and was astonish'd himself at the Approaches of Death: He had overcome the most barbarous Nations, and tam'd the most savage Beasts; but when he came to this last Enemy, he had no Weapons fit for the Encounter. Therefore on this Occasion he discovers the Weakness and Unconstancy of his Mind, far more disturb'd than his Body was with the Disease. Sometimes he employ'd the Magick Art to retard Death; sometimes he made use of his Sword and Poison to hasten it; at last he kill'd himself by an Abstinence from Food necessary to entertain his Life. He had conquer'd all the World, and given Peace and Happiness to his Empire; but he could not overcome himself, or appease the Troubles of his Conscience. He was so far from quieting the disturb'd Thoughts of his Soul, that he suffer'd himself to be overwhelm'd with Despair; he flatter'd his Soul in hastening its Ruin, for when his Disease gave him Liberty to breathe, he talk'd

talk'd unto it on this manner, *My little Soul, my dearest Companion, thou art now going to wander in obscure, cold, and strange Places: Thou shalt never jest again according to thy wonted manner; thou shalt never give me any more Sport or Pleasure.*

You'll say, *Adrian* was a powerful Monarch, but no great Philosopher; perhaps he knew how to govern, and was well acquainted with the Politicks; but he was ignorant of the Morals, and had no Skill to die well. To answer this Objection, let us give an Example beyond all Exception.

*Aristotle* is generally esteem'd to have been the subtlest, and the most learned of the Heathen Antiquity, the Prince of all the Philosophers, the Glory of his Age, and the Founder of his Sect. When his excellent Soul had survey'd all Things, examined the Heavens, search'd among the Excellencies of the Earth, pried into all the Wonders of the World, and found out the rarest Secrets of Nature; he could never find any solid Comforts against the Apprehensions of Death. Notwithstanding all his admirable Subtilties, and his profound Learning, the Fear of this cruel Death terrifies his Conscience in such a manner, that he confessed, *That of all terrible Things, Death was the most dreadful.*



### C H A P. III.

*Of divers Sorts of Death, with which we are to encounter.*

**W**Hen *David* had a Design to fight with *Goliath*, and could not make use of the Armour of King *Saul*, he took a smooth Stone out of his Bag, cast it with his Sling, struck the *Philistine* in the Forehead, and brought down this proud Giant, who had defied the Armies of *Israel*. We have already



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examin'd and try'd all the Armour of human Wisdom and Learning, laid up in the Store-Houses of the greatest Wits of former Ages, and we have found that they are not able to afford us any Assistance in an Encounter with Death. Let us therefore now see whether we may overcome this proud Enemy with the Sling of our mystical *David*, with the Weapons of our divine Shepherd. But before we begin the Resistance, let us look and behold it in the Face. The Enemy that I intend you shall overcome, is a Monster with three Heads, for there are three sorts of Death, the Natural, the Spiritual, and the Eternal.

The Natural Death is a Separation of the Soul from the Body ; altho' our Body hath been fashion'd with the Finger of God, 'tis but a weak and frail Vessel made of Earth ; but our Soul is an heavenly, spiritual and immortal Substance. 'Tis a Sparkle and a Ray of the Godhead, and the lively Image of our great Creator. For when God had made our first Parent, *he breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life*, Gen. ii. 7. that we might thereby understand, that our Souls alone proceeded from his immediate Hand ; therefore he is named the *Father of Spirits*, Heb. xii. and *The faithful Creator of Souls*, 1 Pet. iv. This Soul raises us a Degree above all Animals, and above the celestial Bodies, and renders us like the Angels of Heaven. 'Tis the Light that enlightens us, the Salt that preserves us from Corruption. In one Word, by this Soul we live, enjoy our Senses, move and understand. As soon as this Angelical Guest leaves its Mansion, the Body, it loseth all its Beauty, and falls of itself into a State of Ruin. For this Flesh that we are so careful of, and feed with all manner of Dainties, then corrupts and rots. After that it hath been stretch'd a while upon Beds of Gold, and richly attir'd in Purple and Scarlet, 'tis cast upon a Bed of Worms, and cover'd with the vilest Insects of the Earth. Notwithstanding all its former Perfumes, it  
yields

## against the Fears of DEATH. 17

yields then a most horrid Stink. Before it ravish'd the Eyes of the Beholders with its admirable Beauty; but now it becomes so odious and offensive, that the Living care not to see it; 'tis at last reduc'd to Ashes, according to the Sentence that was pronounc'd in the earthly Paradise, *Dust thou art, and unto Dust thou shalt return.*

The spiritual Death is the Separation of the Soul from God our Creator. For he being the Soul of our Souls, and the Light of our Life, we fall into an Abyfs of Darknefs and Death: *For all those that depart from God shall perish*, Psal. lxxiii. As the Members, when they are cut off from the Body, commonly rot, as the Twig withers when 'tis separated from the Vine; so in a Separation from God, we can neither live, move, nor have a Being. And as 'tis with the Body separated from the Soul, it nourishes a Nest of Worms that devour it, and sends forth a most insufferable Stench; so 'tis with our Souls at a Distance from God: It yields those evil Affections that torment and consume it; and the ill Scent of its Crimes are offensive to Heaven and Earth. Of this kind of Death our Saviour speaks to the *Jews* in this manner; *If you do not believe that I am he, you shall die in your Sins*, Joh. viii. And to the Angel of the Church at *Sardis*, *Thou hast a Name that thou livest, and art dead*, Rev. iii. This same Death St. Paul mentions in the second Chapter of the *Colossians*, and the second of the *Ephesians*. *When we were dead in our Trespasses and Sins, God hath quickned us together with Christ*. And elsewhere he exhorts a sinful Man, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead, and Christ shall give thee Light*, Eph. v. And 'tis of the same kind of Death that St. Paul speaks concerning the wanton Widow, that *she is dead while she liveth*, 1 Tim. v.

It was this kind of Death that *Adam* suffer'd as soon as he had tasted of the forbidden Fruit, according to God's threatning; *In the Day that thou eatest thereof*  
*thou*

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*thou shalt die the Death.* For not only his Body became subject to Death, but his Soul also was cast into the Death of Sin, and enslav'd to Corruption. It happened to him as to a Lamp newly put out, the Snuff yields a most ill-favour'd Scent.

As the Life of Grace is a Preparative to the Life of Glory, and furnisheth us with the Fore-taste of the heavenly Joys: So on the contrary, the Spiritual Life is, as it were, the Suburbs of Hell, 'tis the first beginning of an eternal Death, and the Entrance into the infernal Pit. The eternal Death is nothing else but an entire and irrecoverable Separation of the Soul and Body from God, accompanied with infinite Torments; Torments indeed, unto which all the Sufferings of this mortal Life are light and inconsiderable: Nevertheless, as the Spirit of God represents the heavenly Joys and Felicities by Things that are most pleasant and delightful; thus to express to us Hell Torments, it borrows Things that are the most dreadful and painful in this Life. We are told of an *Abyss or Furnace full of Flames, a bottomless Pit burning with Fire and Brimstone.* The Scripture mentions, *Chains of Darkeness, an eternal Night, and an Hell Fire, where there are weeping and gnashing of Teeth.* It tells us, *that Tophet is ordained of old, yea, for the King 'tis prepared, he hath made it deep and large, the Pile thereof is Fire and much Wood, the Breath of the Lord like a Stream of Brimstone doth kindle it,* Isaiah xxx. 33.

Fancy to yourselves a Man devour'd with Worms, burning in hot Flames, in continual Torments, in whose Wounds kindled Brimstone is pour'd without Intermission, with boiling Lead and burning Pitch; and if there be any other Pains more sharp and grievous, fancy them also. All this will give us but a light and imperfect Image of the State of Hell, for all the Pangs of the Body are nothing in Comparison to the Horrors, Troubles, and incredible Griefs, that shall for ever rack and torture the damn'd Souls.

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As Shame aggravates our Sufferings, and renders them more terrible, the Damned shall be loaden with Shame and Infamy to all Eternity; their Names shall be hateful to God and his holy Angels, and they shall be cursed with an endless Curse. And as 'tis an Increase to our Torment to suffer in the Company of abominable Varlets, and to become a Companion of the most infamous Rascals; they shall suffer with Hell's Executioner, and shall be sent to the Fire prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels. All their Senses shall share in these horrid Torments, they shall be crush'd in the *Wine-press* of God's eternal Wrath, and they shall feel for ever and ever the Strokes of God's Vengeance, and of his Almighty Hand. They shall then learn by Experience, what a terrible thing 'tis to fall into the Hands of the living God; and how insufferable that Fire is that shall consume his Enemies. Their Eyes shall perceive nothing but the bottomless Pit, the Devil's Image, and the Furies of Hell; their Ears shall hear nothing but the horrible Outcries, and fearful Roarings of tormented Devils, and damned Souls. They shall be choak'd with the noisome Smell and Fumes of the bottomless Pit; they shall then drink the very Dregs and Bottom of God's Anger and Indignation, and they shall suck the Venom of his Arrows. *Fire and Brimstone shall be the Portion of their Cup*, Psal. xi.

The Sufferings of this Life are but short, and for a Moment, but the Torments of the Damned shall never end; *Their Worm dieth not, and their Fire shall never be quenched*, Mark ix. Rev. xx. They shall be tormented Day and Night to all Eternity. When they shall have suffer'd as many thousand Ages as there be Drops of Water in the Sea, or Grains of Sand on the Shoar, it shall be but the beginning of their Grief. They shall live for ever to die continually, and they shall die and never be consum'd. In the midst of these hot Flames, they shall beg a Drop of Water to cool their Tongue, *Luke xvi.* but we may say



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say of the Fire that shall torture the Damned, what the Spouse in the *Canticles* saith of the Divine Love that had inflam'd her Soul; *Many Waters cannot quench it, neither can the Floods drown it*, Cant. viii. And St. Paul tells us, *That the Things that God hath prepared for them that love him, Eye hath not seen, Ear hath not heard, nor did it ever enter into the Heart of Man*, 1 Cor. ii. So on the contrary, we may say, that those Things that God hath prepared for them that hate him, *Eye hath not seen, Ear hath not heard, nor did it ever enter into the Heart of Man*. From hence shall proceed their Rage, Madness and Despair; they shall cry in Cain's Language, *My Punishment is greater than I can bear*, Gen. iv. When they shall see nothing but an extreme Misery, and woful Darkness, they shall curse God, the King of all Creatures, *Isa. viii.* In their Fury and Rage they will eat their Tongues, and blaspheme the Great God of Heaven and Earth. It had been far better for such Persons that they had never been born; therefore they shall seek Death, and shall not find it, *Matth. xxvi.* They shall desire to die, that is, to be reduc'd to nothing, *Rev. ix.* But this Death shall fly from them; who of you *can dwell in everlasting Burning?* *Isa. xxxiii.* Who of us can dwell in eternal Flames? *Rev. vi.* If the Vials and little Cups full of God's Wrath force the Wicked to cry out, how much more shall the Rivers and the Ocean of God's Vengeance draw from them, *O Mountains, fall on us, O Rocks, cover us, and hide us from the Face of him that sits upon the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb; for the Day of his Wrath is come, and who may abide it?* But as they have stop'd their Ears to God's gracious Calls, and harden'd their Hearts to his Invitation to Repentance, God shall also stop his Ear to their Out-cries, and his Eyes to their grievous Sufferings; and when they shall be overcome with Fear and Despair, God will scorn and mock at their insufferable Misery.

CHAP. IV.

*That Jesus Christ our Lord hath redeemed us from eternal Death, and by Degrees rescues us from a Spiritual Death.*

WE read in the fifth Chapter of the Revelations of St. John, that he wept bitterly, because no Being in Heaven and Earth, nor under the Earth, was able to open the Book sealed with seven Seals, that was in God's Right Hand. At that Instant, one of the twenty four Elders spake to him, *Weep not, behold the Lion of the Tribe of Juda hath prevail'd to open the Book, and to loose the seven Seals.* Thus we have until now wept bitterly, because we could find no Body in the Armies of *Israel*, to encounter with that powerful Monster Death. But let us also wipe our Tears, and take good Courage, my beloved; for this same Lion of the Tribe of *Juda* is appointed to fight with this dreadful Enemy: Our victorious and triumphing *David*, who hath torn in pieces the infernal Lion, bruised the ancient Serpent's Head, and spoiled *Principalities and Powers, triumphing over them in his Cross*, Col. ii. 15. 'Tis he that hath undertaken this glorious Combat; 'twas for that Purpose that he left for a while the Throne of God the Father, and the Company of his holy Angels, 1 Sam. xvii. 'Twas for that Intent that he came into the Camp and Confusion of *Israel*. He hath not borrow'd the Weapons and Assistance of the World, Heb. ii. All that he hath taken from us, is our frail Nature. But he *bath armed himself with Righteousness, as with a Breast-plate, and hath put on the Helmet of Salvation. He hath cloathed himself with Vengeance as with a Cloak, he hath alone trodden the Wine-Press, and no Body hath assisted him*, Isa. lix. lxiii. But his Arm hath sav'd him, and his Hand hath upheld him. As *David* cut off *Goliath's* Head with his own Sword, Jesus Christ hath

hath overcome Death by Death. Like unto the strong *Sampson*, he hath destroy'd all the Enemies of his Glory by his Death, 1 *Sam.* xvii. He hath overcome in dying, him who had the Empire of Death; that is the Devil, *Heb.* ii. and hath deliver'd them, *who through Fear of Death were all their Life-time subject to Bondage*; then was fulfilled this Saying of *Hosea*, *O Death, I will be thy Plague, O Grave, I will be thy Destruction*, *Hos.* xiii. And that of *Isaiah*, *he will swallow up Death in Victory, and the Lord God will wipe away Tears from off all Faces, and the Rebuke of his People shall be taken away from off all the Earth*, *Isa.* xxv. 1 *Tim.* vi. This blessed Prince, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, who only hath Immortality, and dwelleth in an inaccessible Light, hath destroy'd Death, and brought to light Life and Immortality by the Gospel, 1 *Tim.* i. *O Death where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law; but Thanks be to God who hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 *Cor.* xv.

This great God and Saviour has perfectly redeem'd us from eternal Death, as he himself teaches us in the Gospel of *St. John*. *He that heareth my Word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation, but is passed from Death unto Life*, Chap. v. 24. *I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven, if any Man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever*, Chap. vi. 51. v. 40. *Your Fathers did eat Manna in the Wilderness, and are dead, that is the Bread which cometh down from Heaven, that a Man may eat thereof and not die*, Chap. viii. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a Man keep my Word, he shall never taste of Death. I am the Resurrection and the Life, he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die, and he that believeth in me, although he were dead, yet shall he live*, Chap. xi. The Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is eternal Life through our Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed and Holy is he that hath part in the first Resurrection, *Rev.* xx. The second Death shall never have any Power upon him.



him. In a Word, the Gates of Hell, that is to say, Death, cannot prejudice them who are settled upon Jesus Christ, the Rock of Eternity. This merciful Saviour hath also deliver'd us from the Spiritual Death, *Eph. ii.* For we being dead in our Trespases and Sins, he hath quickned us, and rais'd us up together unto newness of Life, *Coloff. ii.* He hath carried our Sins in his Body upon the Cross, that he dying unto Sin, we might live unto Righteousness. We are buried with him in his Death by Baptism, that as Jesus Christ is raised from the Dead by the Glory of God the Father, we also should walk in newness of Life, *1 Pet. ii.* *Awake thou that sleepest, and rise from the Dead, and Jesus Christ shall enlighten thee,* *Rom. vi.* For by his Death he hath not only reconciled us to God the Father, *Eph. v. Coloff. xi.* but he hath also procur'd to us the Holy Spirit that creates in us a new Heart, and imprints the Image of his Holiness, *Ezek. xxxvi. 2 Cor. v.* He makes us become new Creatures, and regenerates us by the uncorruptible Seed, *1 Pet. i.* This is that which the Scripture names the first Resurrection, *Rev. xx.* St. Peter was ravish'd in Admiration at this great and wonderful Benefit, and therefore he acknowledg'd it, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead,* *1 Pet. i.* God discover'd to the Prophet Ezekiel a Field cover'd with dry Bones, and commanded him to prophesy upon these Bones, *Ezek. xxxvii.* At the Prophet's Command they began to draw near to one another, then the Nerves began to appear, the Flesh to grow, and to be cover'd with Skin, but there was no Life until God commanded the Prophet to prophesy again, *Thus saith the Lord, Spirit, come from the four Winds, blow upon these dead Bodies, and let them rise from the Dead.* Then the Spirit entred into them, they began to revive, and they stood upon their Legs. This is the lively and true Image of the first Resurrection. For the Spirit of God that blows whither

it lifteth, regenerates us by degrees, *John* iii. and the new Man is created in our Hearts by little and little, as the Child grows in its Mother's Womb.

When *Joshua* brought the Children of *Israel* into the Land of Promise, he destroyed not all the *Canaanites*, *Josh.* xxiii. there remained some who became Scourges in their Sides, and Thorns in their Eyes. Thus our true and spiritual *Joshua*, who had led us into the Kingdom of his Grace, hath not altogether destroy'd all our evil Affections; some yet remain that are like Prickles in our Sides, and like Swords that pierce thro' our Souls. They yet render our Life bitter and unpleasant, therefore we often desire Death to come and put a Period to this Conflict. Sin was in Possession of us as a strong Man armed in an House; but Jesus Christ is enter'd into our Souls, and become Master; he hath therefore bound and chain'd Sin, and hath nailed it to his Cross. But this furious Beast, tho' it hath receiv'd a mortal Wound, and is ready to give up the last Gasps, it struggles and foams within us. Our blessed Saviour hath extinguished with the red Stream of his Blood, the infernal Flames of our cursed Affections; but yet there remains in the Ashes some Sparkles of this devilish Fire, that yet cause in us feverish Fits. Only this merciful Redeemer, of his infinite Goodness hath loosed us from the Devil's Chains; but that we might have Cause to be humble, to desire the Encrease of Grace, and long for the Arrival of his Glory, he leaves about us some of the troublesome Fetters: By his holy Spirit he files them off by degrees; but one Day he will take them away from us.

At the Voice of this Prince of Life, that reaches to the very bottom of our Hearts, we are risen from the Sepulchre of our Vices with our grave Cloaths about us, as *Lazarus* when he came out of his Tomb. We are like the ancient Slaves who were set at Liberty; we bear upon our Foreheads the visible Marks of our ancient Bondage; but one Day our Lord Jesus Christ shall cover these Marks of Infamy and Disgrace with an heavenly Diadem.

Diadem. If you desire another Image of our spiritual Condition, fancy to yourselves a dead Man cast into a foul Pit or Sink, unto whom Life is restor'd in a Moment; afterwards by degrees he is wash'd and cleans'd of that Filth that cover'd his Body. We were not only dead of a spiritual Death, but we were also overwhelm'd in an Abyfs of Corruption and Filth. The Son of God hath pull'd us out of this Abyfs, and already restor'd us to Life; but the Dirt and Putrefaction with which we are disfigur'd, he washes away with the Water of Grace, *Zach. xiii. For there is a Fountain opened for Sin in the House of David. Isa. iv.* in the which God hath promised to wash away all the Filth of the Daughter of *Sion*, and all the Blood of *Jerusalem*. And as it happen'd to the cruel King *Adonibezek*, when the Tribe of *Judab* took him Prisoner, he lost the Thumbs of his Hands, and the great Toes of his Feet, but he suffer'd not Death till he came to *Jerusalem*; thus our great God and Saviour, the Prince of the Tribe of *Judab*, hath cut off the Strength and Power of the old Man who tyranniz'd in our Souls, and hath depriv'd him of his venomous Nails, with which he wounded our Hearts; he hath also given him his mortal Wound, but he suffers him to enjoy a languishing Life, and will not take away his last Breath, until we bring him to the Gates of the heavenly *Jerusalem*.

But to speak more openly, Sin is yet in us, but it reigneth not: For our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ hath broken its Sceptre, and pulled it from the Throne; and as he hath taken from it all Command in us, he constrains it to leave the Possession of our Souls by degrees. As a strong and mighty King, who having won the Battle, pursues and drives the Enemy, until he hath totally expell'd them out of his Kingdom; so doth our Saviour deal with Sin.

And as it happens with a Woman with Child in her old-Age, there is in her Body two contrary Lives, that of the Mother, and that of the Child; the one de-



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cays and dies insensibly, the Child's Life grows and increaseth by Degrees; so 'tis in the faithful and regenerate Soul; there are two Lives, that of *Sin*, that the Scripture names *the old Man*; and that of the new Man, which is created according to God, in Righteousness and true Holiness: The one diminishes and draws to its final End; but the other grows and gathers Strength, until we arrive to the perfect Stature of our Lord Jesus Christ; the Spirit of God every Day gets Ground of our Corruption and Weakness.



### CH A P. V.

*Why we are yet subjected to the corporal or natural Death, and what Advantage we thereby receive in Jesus Christ.*

THE wise King teacheth us in the Ninth of Ecclesiastes, *That the same Accident happens to all, to the Righteous and to the Wicked, to the Clean, and to the Polluted, to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not.* These Words are to be understood of the several Afflictions unto which we are expos'd during this mortal Life: but we may apply it to the natural Death; For 'tis appointed unto all once to die, and after that the Judgment follows, Heb. ix. By one Man Sin is enter'd into the World, and by Sin Death; and thus Death is come upon all Men, because they have all sinned, Rom. v. Therefore when *Josbua* felt himself feeble and decaying, he told the Children of *Israel*, *That he was going the way of all Flesh*, Josh. xxiii. And *Job* complains unto God, *I know that thou wilt reduce me to Death, and to the House appointed for all Living*, Job xx. 'Twas upon this Subject that the Royal Prophet was exercising his Meditation when he cried out, *Who is he that liveth and shall not see Death! Shall he free his Soul from the Power of the Grave?* Psal.

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## against the Fears of DEATH. 27

lxxxix. And to speak the Language of Solomon, *Or ever the silver Cord be loosed, or the golden Bowl broken, or the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain, or the Wheel be broken at the Cistern*: That is to say, the Back-bone, where Marrow is as white as Silver, be loosed; when the Skull, which is like a precious Vessel of Gold, be broken; when the *Vena Cava* receives no more Blood from the Liver, the Fountain of Life; when the Lights which draw in, and push forth the Breath, move no more; or when the Kidneys which extract the Humidity from the Veins, and cause it to drop down into the Bladder, as into a Cistern, begin to fail, *then shall the Body return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit shall return unto God that gave it.*

To exprefs to us this inevitable Fate, *Moses* reckons up all the ancient Fathers who have liv'd longest in the first World; he mentions some who liv'd 700, others 800, others 809 Years, and some near 1000, *Gen. v.* But when he had well spoken of their Deeds, and of their Children which they left behind, he adds, in the Conclusion of all, and then such an one died. Thus our Creator executes upon all Men, the Sentence once pronounc'd against *Adam*, the Father of all Mankind, *Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return.*

By this means God declares his Justice and Truth, and accomplished what was signified by the ancient Types, *Levit. xiv.* For according to the Laws which God gave to *Israel* by *Moses*, the House that was infected with *Leprosy*, was to be demolish'd and cast into a noisome Place. There is a more urgent Cause for a Man's Body to be destroy'd, and laid in the Sepulchre, because he was created to be the Palace of the Living God, the Dwelling of his Glory; but *Sin*, a kind of infectious Leprosy, hath insinuated itself, and disfigur'd it, hath enter'd the Skin, corrupted the Blood, disorder'd the Spirits, crept into the Joynts and Marrow, and hath spread its Venom in such a Manner, that there is none of our Members but is an Instrument of Iniquity and Unrighteousness, *Rom. vi.*

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For the same Reason, we cannot sufficiently admire the Difference which God hath put between the Vessels that were clean and such as were unclean. For he commanded that the Earthen Vessels infected, should be broken in Pieces, *Lev. xi.* but that such as were of a more valuable Substance, should be only washed with Water, and purified with Fire, *Numb. xi.* The Commands and Laws of the Great God are excellent Commentaries upon his Actions. Our Soul is like a Golden Vessel; because it is a spiritual and heavenly Substance; therefore God doth not altogether destroy it, altho' it be infected with Sin; but causeth it to be washed and cleansed at the Fountain of his infinite Mercy. He purifies it with the Blood of his Son, and causes it to pass thro' the Fire of his Holy Spirit. But for this miserable Body, an Earthly Vessel and Tabernacle, he breaks it to Pieces, and reduces it to Dust and Ashes. 'Tis my Judgment, that Death is an excellent Means to demonstrate the infinite Power of our Great God and Saviour: For the greater the Disease is, the more admirable is the Cure. Without doubt the Finger of God, and his infinite Power, is far more visible in raising one Man from the Dead, than preserving many Thousands alive.

As God is wont to lighten our Darkeness, so he makes use of Death to cause his infinite Wisdom to shine and appear in all his Creatures. Sin hath brought forth Death, and Death on the contrary, as a most fortunate Parricide, kills and destroys its Parent Sin: For 'tis Death that totally roots out of our Souls all corrupt Affections.

Moreover, God, who is the same Yesterday, to Day and for ever, *Heb. xiii.* will have all his Children pass thro' the same Path, to take Possession of his eternal Inheritance, and enter by the same Gate into his Royal Palace. All the Faithful of the *Old Testament* are gone already this Way, *Through many Tribulations, Acts xxiv.* They are arriv'd to the Kingdom of God, and through Death they are come to the Abode of  
Life



Life and Immortality. The holy Scriptures that are inspir'd of God, tell us, That *the* Reubenites, and half the Tribe of Manasses, *Numb.* xxxii. *Josh.* i. left their Dwellings which they had beyond *Jordan*, to go over and fight in the Army of *Israel*, and did not offer to return until God had given Rest to their Brethren, and put them into a peaceable Possession of their Inheritances. If I may make some stop at such an excellent Allegory, I may say, that these Passages represent to us a lively Figure of the Faithful who die before the End of the World: For they leave their Bodies, the Abode and Dwellings of their Souls, and pass thro' Death, as thro' another *Jordan*, into the celestial *Canaan*, to encounter with God by their Prayers, in the Society of the First-born, whose Names are registred in Heaven, and they will not return again to their Bodies, until the Number of the Saints be compleat, until the Building of the Church be finish'd, and until our great *Joshua* hath introduc'd us into his eternal Rest, and put us in Possession of the incorruptible Inheritances reserv'd for us in Heaven. Then we shall not need to fight, but to enjoy peaceably the Fruits of our Victories, and to rest for ever from our Labours. We shall have no Cause to offer to God Prayers and Supplications; but our Business shall be to sing unto him Praises and eternal Thanksgivings.

The most considerable Reason, in my Judgment, of this our Destiny, is, That God has predestinated us to be conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the First-born among many Brethren; he will have us be baptized with his Baptism, and drink in his Cup, and enter into Bliss by the same Gate, thro' which he hath already pass'd. Thro' Shame and Disgrace he is arriv'd to Glory; and thro' Death he is enter'd into Life. He hath drunk of the bitter Waters, before he tasted of the River of celestial Joys; and he went down into the Grave, before he would mount up to the Right Hand of God.

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Although 'tis appointed unto all Men once to die, *Heb. ix.* I dare affirm that Death hath no Cause to triumph, because the chief Advantage is not on that Side. We read in the Book of *Esther*, that King *Abasuerus* would not recal the Proclamation that he had sent forth against the *Jews*, but he gave them full Liberty to take up Arms to defend themselves, to attack their Enemies, and to make them suffer all the Mischief they intended against them. I find something like unto this Proceeding; for God would not call back the Sentence of Death pronounc'd against Mankind in the Garden of *Eden*; nevertheless he allows us, nay, he commands his true *Israel* to take up Arms against Death, to conquer and trample it under Feet.

In the first Place, Jesus Christ, our Head, hath encounter'd with Death, and overcome it, he hath pursued it into its Trenches, and baffled it in its own Fortification; Death thought to have devour'd him, but it hath been devour'd itself. As the Fishes are taken by the Hook that they think to swallow; and as the Bees hurt those whom they sting, but do greater harm to themselves; for they cause a present Pain in our Body, and a Heat that soon ceaseth; but they prejudice themselves more; for they break their Stings, and lose thereby their Lives: Thus Death, by fixing its Sting in the Humanity of Jesus Christ, hath put him to a great deal of Pain for a Time, but it hath thereby lost all Strength and Vigour for ever.

[ The Men of *Judah*, to satisfy the inrag'd *Philistines*, deliver'd into their Hands *Sampson* bound with Ropes. When they saw him, they gave several joyful Shouts; but the Spirit of God came upon him in such a manner, that he tore in Pieces the two Ropes wherewith he was bound, and overcame them by whom he was to be led away Prisoner, and kill'd a Thousand of them. Thus the miserable *Jews*, for Fear of the *Romans*, deliver'd unto them our Lord Jesus Christ, their Brother according to the Flesh, bound like a Malefactor. When Hell saw him nail'd to the Cross, and afterwards laid in

in a Grave, it did wonderfully rejoyce the Devil, and his Angels began to sing Songs of Triumph. But it was altogether impossible that the Prince of Life should be detain'd in the Prisons of Death. He hath not only broken out of the Grave by his infinite Power, but hath also trampled under Feet all his most furious Enemies, and overcome Millions of Infernal Fiends. And to declare how Life and Death were in his Power, he hath baffled Death, when he was, as it were, a Prisoner shut up in its Dungeon. He hath broke open the Gates of this black Prison, and torn in pieces all its Fetters. For when he was yet in the Grave, he rais'd to Life many that were dead, who were seen in the holy City; and yet at present he holds in his Hand the Keys of Death and of Hell. Therefore, as Children rejoyce at their Father's Victory, and as the Subjects are concern'd at the prosperous Proceedings of their King, and as the Members are the better for the Glory and Honour of their Head; thus may we justly glory in the most notable Victories, and famous Triumphs of Jesus Christ, who is our Father, King, and Head. We may also justly glory that we are Lords of Death, and that we have overcome it in the Person of our Great God and Saviour, I say this after the Apostle St. Paul, *That God hath quicken'd us together, and rais'd us together, and made us sit together in heavenly Places with Jesus Christ*, Eph. ii.

Moreover, as our Saviour hath once overcome Death for us, he continues to subdue it in and by us. He suffers us not to encounter with our Enemies alone, nor leaves us in our Agonies; but as in a Day of Battle, a wise and provident General hath an Eye to every Place, and encourages by his Action and Voice, his Soldiers, whom he perceives at handy-blows with the Enemy; some he loads with Praises, others with Promises; by that means he encourageth such as behave themselves bravely; rescues the weak and feeble, and to such as are over-born, he furnishes them with fresh Supplies: Thus deals with us our Lord and Saviour



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Jesus Christ the great God of Hosts, who sits above in the Heavens in Triumph, and beholds all our Combats and Encounters. When he perceives us too weak, that we might not be overcome by our dreadful Enemies, he furnishes us with his Holy Spirit, and his own Armour, as *Jonathan* did *David*, when he deliver'd to him his Cloak, his Bow, his Belt, and Sword. Besides, this merciful Saviour disarms Death of its most hurtful Weapons, and takes away all its Arrows and Darts.

As the Strength and Power of *Samson* lodg'd in the Hair of his Head, which the *Philistines* could ne'er have imagin'd; so the Strength and Power of Death consists in such things as the World least dreams of. The most dreadful Weapons, with which it terrifies and beats us, are the Thunderbolts and Curses of the Law, and our Sins are Poison in which it dips its Arrows, or rather our Sins are the fiery Darts with which it wounds and destroys us. Now Jesus Christ hath redeem'd us from the Curse of the Law, when he became a Curse for us, *Gall. iii.* He hath carried our Sins in his Body upon the Cross, *1 Pet. ii.* And as the He-goat *Harazel*, hath transported them away into an uninhabitable Desert, *Levit. xvi.* He hath remov'd them from the Eyes of our God, as far as the *East* is from the *West*; he hath cast them to the Bottom of the Ocean, and drown'd them in his Blood; so that we may now see fulfill'd, what was foretold by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, the Iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the Sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, *Chap. i.*

Therefore, being befriended with the Grace of God, and arm'd with the Virtue of his Holy Spirit, let us shew our Courage and despise Death; let us look it in the Face without Fear, laugh at all its Threats, and encounter it without Dread, for 'tis now like an insolent Soldier without Weapons: 'tis like a Bee without its Sting; 'tis like an old Lion that roars, but hath lost all his Claws; 'tis like a Snake that would convey its Poyson, but hath no venomous Teeth left, having  
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been pulled out by him, who hath bruised the Serpent's Head.

If you consider nothing but Death's Exterior, its Face and fearful Appearance, its frigid Eyes, its meager Body, its iron'd Hands; you cannot perceive any Difference between the Death of God's Children, and that of the most wicked Varlets. But if you lift up the Masque, and examine the Death of the one, and of the other more exactly, you will meet with as great Difference as betwixt Heaven and Earth, the Paradise of God and Hell. For as *Moses's* brazen Serpent, which he lifted up in the Desert, had the Form and Appearance of a burning Serpent, but nothing of the Poison and Fire: Thus the Death of the Faithful appears as the Death of other Men, but hath not the deadly and pernicious Consequences. For 'tis not only a Sign and a Testimony of God's Grace and Favour, but the beginning of our Deliverance, and the cure of all Diseases. As *Moses* when he had cast Wood into the Waters of *Marah*, they had the same Colour, but not the same Bitterness, and unpleasant Taste: Thus the Death of God's dearest Children hath the same Tincture and Appearance as before; but Christ's Cross hath taken away the Danger, the Trouble, and extracted out of it distastful Bitterness, and chang'd it into unspeakable Sweetness. As *Pharoah* was drown'd, with all his Army, in the Waters of the *Red-sea*, but the Children of *Israel* found a secure and pleasant Passage into the promised Land; when they were arriv'd upon the other Shore of that dreadful Sea, they sung unto God Songs of Triumph and Thanksgiving: Thus Death opens its Jaws to devour the Reprobates; 'tis an Abyss where they can find no bottom; but unto the Children of God 'tis a favourable Passage into an eternal Bliss; as soon as they are gone through, they are arriv'd at the Place of Assurance, Joy, and Rest, where God furnishes them with Songs of Triumph and Thanksgiving to the Lamb, *Rev. i. 15.*

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*Balaam* the Prophet was call'd to curse the People of God, but he blessed them, contrary to the vain Expectation of *Balak*, King of *Moab*. Thus Death hath been brought into the World by the Devil, to destroy and utterly abolish the holy Seed; but God by his infinite Goodness and Wisdom hath chang'd it into Salvation and Blessing. Let us not therefore be any longer puzzled to find out the Meaning of *Sampson's* Riddle, *Out of the Eater came forth Meat, and out of the Strong came forth Sweetness*, Judg. xiv. For the Church of God, unto whom Christ hath discover'd the most excellent Secrets of his Kingdom, teaches us to seek the sweetest Comforts out of the Belly of this old Lion.

'Tis not possible to judge of Musick by a single Note, or of an Oration by a Period, nor of a Comedy by a Scene. So we must not judge of a Battle by the first Assault, nor of a Wrestling by the first Embraces and Efforts of the Wrestlers. For some in the beginning of the Battle turn their Backs, who nevertheless at last often win the Victory; and some in Wrestling are foil'd at the beginning, who nevertheless supplant their Enemy, and cast him upon the Ground. Therefore that we may better understand the great and notable Advantages that we have over Death, we must examine it all along until the End of the Encounter; we must take notice of every Assault that we give unto this unreconcilable Enemy.

As soon as the Taper of our Life begins to burn, Satan sends forth his Blaſts to extinguish it. Death labours to undermine this poor Dwelling from the first Moment that it was built, besieges it on all Sides, makes its Approaches, in time it saps the Foundation, it batters us with several Diseases and unexpected Accidents, every Day it opens a Breach, and pulls out of this Building some Stones. But if Death labours to demolish on his Part, we on ours labour to repair: And as those who built the Walls of *Jerusalem* held with one Hand the Trowel, and with the other a Sword to fight; so we defend ourselves, as well as we are able,  
against



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against the Assaults of Death. Therefore we do not only endeavour to preserve this earthly Lodge that God hath let and set to us for a Term, and to mend up the continual Dilapidations that happen in it: But at the very Sight of Death, when it gives us the Assault, we do then also advance our spiritual Building, and labour to bring it to Perfection. So that we may say as the Apostle St. Paul, *If our outward Man decays, the inward Man is renewed Day by Day*, 2 Cor. iv.

To speak right, Death meddles with nothing but with the exterior Part of Man. For our principal Fort, and chief Bulwark, hath no Cause to fear to be undermin'd nor sapt, nor to be won by Assault; for 'tis rais'd above the Heavens, and built upon the Rock of Eternity. It cannot be batter'd: For as the Thunderbolts, the Storms of Hail and ill Weather cannot prejudice the Sun-beams, because they are of a spiritual Nature: So all the Fury of the World, all the Powers of Hell, and the Rage of Death, can never wrong the Soul, that is of a spiritual and immortal Nature. This Castle can never be famish'd, for God furnishes it with Manna from Heaven; and from the Rock upon which 'tis built, there runs a Source of living Waters, that riseth to everlasting Life. In a Word, as the Serpents crawl only upon the Dust, Death hath no Power but upon the earthly Part of Man; therefore our Lord Jesus Christ adviseth his Apostles, *not to fear them that kill the Body, but cannot kill the Soul*.

At the very Instant of our Soul's Separation from the Body, Death seems to have a great Advantage upon us; but when I consider all, I find that it hath no Cause to boast of the Victory. When a valiant Captain marcheth out of a Town almost destroy'd, to another more secur'd and better fortified, with his Weapons in his Hand; we say that he has quitted his Station, and not that he is overcome. Thus when the wretched Body decays, and that our Souls depart well arm'd with Faith and Hope, to lodge in a more secure Place in the highest Heavens; no Body can say, to speak properly,

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perly, that we have been overcome. And it happens to such as sail on the Ocean, when a violent Storm threatens them with Shipwreck, they think themselves very happy if they can quit their Vessel, leave it to the Mercy of the Winds and Waves, and escape to Land with their Riches and Lives safe: Thus 'tis with us who fall upon this tempestuous Sea of the World; when Death raiseth its most cruel Storms, we think ourselves happy if we can leave this miserable Body, which seems as a Ship to our Souls; and if we can secure our spiritual Life and our heavenly Riches. Therefore we may justly say to the Faithful that are frightened when they see Death threatening to drown them in its Depths, as *St. Paul* to his Ship's Company, who trembled for Fear at the Sight of roaring and swelling Waves; *Take good Courage, my Brethren, for I assure you, in the Name of the living God, that your Lives are secure, and that you shall lose nothing but this Ship,* Act. xxvii. We may yet furnish them with stronger Comforts; for these good Mariners lost their Ship without any hopes of recovering it again; but we are assured that God will one Day gather up every piece of the broken Vessels of our Bodies, and will join them together in a more perfect Estate.

Therefore Death doth not carry away our Bodies by Violence, but we leave them willingly; we do not stay for its Summons, but we do prevent Death, and give it a Licence; when we have packt up our Bag and Baggage, we are ready to depart out of this wretched Abode where we endure all manner of Calamities; for in this House, Defluxions fall down, Vapours arise, the Pillars and Foundations tremble, the Joints open, the Windows are darkned, and the burning Fevers, like violent Fires, consume it.

I must not forget, that the Faithful name their Death not only a Removal of their Lodging, but a Removal from a Tabernacle. This teacheth us, that we must depart from hence with as much Joy, and Readiness, as a Soldier doth out of his Tabernacle, at the End of

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a laborious and bloody Warfare; and with as much Pleasure as the Children of *Israel* did out of their Camps in which they had remain'd in the Defart, to enter into the sweet and comfortable Dwellings of the Land of *Canaan*.

Not only that Body is like to an hired House, or to a Tabernacle transported up and down; but 'tis by Sin become to our Soul a woful Prison. Therefore Death may be compar'd to the Messengers sent by King *Pharoah*, on purpose to take *Joseph* out of the Dungeon, and bring him to his Palace. The Body that was created to be a noble Pavilion of Joy and Honour, is become, to our Soul, a wretched incommodious Prison; and Death is like to the Furnace of *Babylon*, that burnt and consumed the Bands of the three Children, without prejudicing their Persons or Attire, *Dan. iii.* For it destroys the natural Bands that detain our Souls enslav'd to the Earth; but meddles not with its Ornaments, with its Righteousness and Sanctification. 'Tis like the Skin that enclosed the Child in his Mother's Womb, or like the Shell where the Chicken is formed: For of Necessity it must be broken before we can enter into immortal Life. In short, we may say, that the Body which was given to the Soul, to its Palace, is become, by Sin, its Grave, and loathsome Sepulchre, far more noisome than that of *Lazarus*; and that Death is like the Voice that calls upon us, *Lazarus, come out.* Faithful Souls, you see then, that as *Sampson* carried away the Gates of the City of *Gaza*, and transported them to the top of the Hill; so hath Jesus Christ, our true *Sampson*, transported and carried the Gates of Death to the highest Pitch of Glory: Therefore, whereas before we lookt upon it with Horror at the Entrance of Hell; now we may behold it with Confidence and Joy, saying as *Jacob* did of *Bethel*, *This is the Gate of Heaven.*

Seeing therefore, that this is the Nature and Condition of Death, I find, that Men give it too much Advantage; for we should not offer to say, that such are dead whom God hath admitted into eternal Life; because the Qualification should be deriv'd from the chief



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chief and noblest Part : As 'tis in Nature, there is no Generation without Corruption ; and we commonly say, That 'tis a Generation, when the thing engender'd is more excellent than the thing corrupted ; on the contrary, that 'tis a Corruption when the thing corrupted excels the thing that is engender'd. For this Reason, our Change and Removal out of this World shall rather be stil'd a Life than a Death : Though our Body dies and rots in the Earth, our Soul revives and mounts up to Heaven ; and this mortal Life which we leave with the World, is nothing in Comparifon of that Life that we shall enjoy with Chrift and his holy Angels. God is named the God of *Abraham*, of *Isaac* and of *Jacob*. *Now he is not the God of the Dead, but of the living*, *Exod. iv. Mat. xxii.*

I may alfo without any Figure affirm, That Death, in refpect of the Body, is no real Death, but a kind of Sleep ; as 'tis faid in the Prophet *Daniel*, *Many fleep in the Duft of the Earth*, Chap. xii. And in *Isaiah*, that the *Just fleep in their Beds*. Therefore our Saviour fpeaking of *Jairus's* Daughter, declar'd, *The Child is not dead, but fleepeth*, *Mat. ix.* And *Lazarus* his Friend, *Lazarus our Friend fleepeth, and I go to awake him*. Belov'd, if thou art of the Number of fuch as Chrift loveth, thy Death will be but a kind of Sleep of a fhort Continuance, and of a few Days ; the Lord will raife thee up again : *For the Hour cometh, and is already, that the Dead fhall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that fhall hear, fhall revive*, *Joh. v.* During this Life, the Affaults of Death are no better than light Skirmifhes, the moft fenfible and moft dangerous Blow that it ftrikes, in Appearance, is when it feparates the Soul from the Body ; but the laft and moft final Encounter, that will put an end to all Difputes, will be at the Day of Judgment, when *Jesus Chrift* will appear from Heaven with the Hoft of all his immortal Angels and Saints, to encourage us to the Encounter. He will come with an encouraging Voice of an Archangel, and the laft Trumpet fhall found. Then Death will endeavour to keep

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keep us still in its black Prisons, and our Bones will be found without Life or Motion; but the Spirit of God shall breathe upon these dry Bones, and will cause 'em to revive. As when the Prophet *Jonas* was three Days and three Nights in the Belly of the Whale, God commanded the Fish to vomit him up again upon the Ground; thus, when we shall have made so long our Abode in our Graves, as God hath appointed in his Wisdom, Death shall be forced to restore all that it hath swallow'd. And as *Daniel* came out of the Lion's Den by break of Day, those savage Beasts having done him no harm; thus at the Break of the last Day, at the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, we shall all go out of Death's deep Dens; and, as if God had sent an Angel on purpose to shut the Mouth of this old Lion, we shall then find that it hath done us no harm. Instead of devouring us, it will prove a faithful Keeper of our Bones. The Faithful then may speak to Death in the Language of the Prophet *Micah*, *Rejoyce not against me, O mine Enemy, when I shall fall I shall rise, when I sit in Darknes, the Lord shall be a Light unto me*, Micah vii. 8. As *Moses* said to *Pharoah*, *We will go into the Wildernes to sacrifice unto our God, we will go out of thine Egypt with our Young and with our Old, with our Sons and with our Daughters, with our Flocks and with our Herds, there shall not an Hoof be left behind*, Exod. x. Thus we, in an holy Confidence, may talk with Death; maugre thy Rage and Fury, we will go up to Heaven to sacrifice to our God immortal Praises; we shall get out of thy Fetters. We, our Wives, our Children, our Brothers and Sisters, our Parents and Friends, all the People of God, whom thou dost at present keep in a close Restraint. Notwithstanding the infernal Attempts of thine inhuman Power, there shall not remain so much as an Handful, no not so much as the least Grain of our Ashes behind us.

When the Son of God shall appear in his Glory from Heaven, he shall consume all Death's Trophies and Monuments with irresistible Flames; so that it shall

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shall happen to this imperious Enemy of Mankind, as it happen'd to the Kings of the *Amorites* mention'd in the *Israelitish* History, *Josh. x. 24.* *Joshua* suffer'd them to live until he was return'd from the Victory ; and when he had perfectly overcome all his Enemies, he commanded them to be brought forth, and gave Order to his Captains to tread upon their Necks, and with his own Sword he dispatched them, cast them into a Cave, and caused great Stones to be roll'd at the Entrance of it. Thus shall our true and celestial *Joshua* deal with Death ; he suffers it to reign while he is gone to pursue his Enemies ; for the last Enemy that shall be destroyed by him is Death. When he shall have perfectly subdu'd all other Enemies, he will crown all his Victories with a glorious End, and accomplish the Church's Triumph, by causing us to trample upon Death, that shall be cast into the bottomless Pit, whereof the Entrance shall be shut up for ever, *Rev. x.* Then shall be accomplish'd this glorious Prophecy, *Death is swallowed up in Victory,* 1 Cor. xv. For the Spirit of God assures us in expresse Terms, *That Death shall be no more.*

By what we have said, it may easily appear, what is become of the Rope thrice twisted by the Devil, with an intent to strangle therewith all Mankind. The Son of God hath cut in Pieces the first of these unhappy Ties, by the Almighty Power. By the Spirit of *Sanctification*, he loosens the second by Degrees ; and by the last he draws us to himself, and then he burns and consumes it altogether. Therefore we have no Reason to fear an eternal Death, nor to tremble when Hell opens its wide Jaws. If we *resist the Devil*, *he flies away from us*, *Jam. iv.* At last we shall trample him under our Feet, *Rom. xvi.* 'Tis true, that the sad and doleful Effects of the spiritual Death commonly draw out of us many a sad Groan and Tear, whilst our Souls remain in this sinful Flesh. We are already got out of the Tombs of Corruption and Sin ; but yet bear about us, as it were, our Winding-sheet, and  
some



some odd Reliques of our natural Misery. But we have this Consideration to comfort our drooping Spirits, That Christ will shortly give the same Order from Heaven for us, as he did for *Lazarus*, *Loose him, and let him go*, Joh. xi. So that instead of the Corruption of our Nature, that is so incommodious to us, he will invest us in an Estate of Glory, Incorruption, Immortality, and perfect Happiness. In relation to the natural Death, we may justly say, That our Lord and Saviour hath freed us from all the Fears that it might cause in us. So that 'tis my Judgment, that we may not only affirm, that we have not the least Apprehension of it; but we may expect it with Confidence: For if we be truly of the Number of the Faithful, and God's adopted Sons, we hope, desire, and rather hasten Death's Arrival, by our most earnest and passionate Wishes.

What I have already declared in this Chapter, might satisfy any Christian Soul, and furnish it with sufficient Considerations to strengthen it against all Apprehensions from Death. Now, as one who wants to buy Stuffs in a Shop, when he cheapens such as are slight, and of small Value, he casts his Eye only upon a Piece or Pattern, and by that judges of the rest; but when he intends to purchase a rich Tapestry of great Value, he desires to view and consider every Part, one after another, and make an Estimation of the Value and Beauty of every Corner; so I judge, that the wise and religious Reader will desire now, that as I have discovered to him in gross, the Body of *Consolations against the Fear of Death*, I should, in the next Place, unfold the hidden Excellencies, produce every Part of them by Degrees to his Contemplation, and with my Pen, make him take notice of all the Rarities.

## C H A P. VI.

*From whence proceed the Fears of Death.*

**A**S a wife and discreet Physician usually examines with Care the Causes of the Disease, before he prescribes a Remedy ; and as an experienced Surgeon searcheth the Wound, before he puts the Plaster to it ; thus, I judge it necessary, to seek with Diligence from whence the Fears of Death proceed, before we shall appoint Remedies to the faithful Souls. For when we shall perfectly understand the Nature of the Disease, and its principal Causes, we shall, without Difficulty, be better able to assign a convenient Remedy. When we shall have searched the Wound, and washed it clean, we will, with God's Assistance, pour into it the true Balm of *Gilead*.

1. We have just Reason to accuse ourselves of too much unmindfulness of Death. We don't meditate so often as we should, upon the Misery and Frailty of our poor decaying Nature. We acknowledge it, I confess, with our Tongues, that our Life is but a Breath in our Nostrils, a Vapour that soon disappears, a Shadow that quickly vanishes away ; but in the mean time we flatter ourselves in our Hearts with more pleasant Thoughts and Desires, as *Herod*, that Men should look upon us as so many little Gods, *Acts* xii. We suffer ourselves to be deceiv'd by the flattering Insinuations of our corrupted Flesh, and by the delusive Suggestions of the old Serpent, that whispers to us, as to our first Parents, *You shall not die*, *Gen.* iii.

2. We commonly affirm, that Death is inexorable ; nevertheless, for the most part, we live as if we had made an Agreement with Death, and had secret Intelligence with the Grave, *Isa.* xxii. Death approaches with Feet of Wool, without Noise ; we imagine therefore that it will never come near us, as that wicked Servant in the Gospel, *Matth.* xxiv. who concluded

concluded from his Master's Delays of coming, that he would not come at all. We hate and abominate the Sight of all Things that represent unto us any Appearance of Death, or that call to our Minds its Remembrance. If at any time its Image comes in our way, we turn from it our Eyes, and banish out of our Fancy all Imaginations of it, as of a most odious and deceitful Illusion. Death seizes upon us before we have well thought whether we be mortal or no. Therefore we are surpriz'd and astonish'd at the Approaches; and we become like the foolish *Israelites*, who trembled and fled before *Goliath*, because they were not accustom'd to behold him.

3. We depend too much upon second Causes. We look upon Death as a thing that happens by Chance, or as an Evil that may be prevented, or at least put away from us for a time: Whereas we should be fully persuaded, that God hath determin'd and appointed, not only Death itself, but also all the Causes and Means by which it commonly happens. Therefore we are often filled with Displeasure, and seduced to murmur and repine against God. We grin and bite the Stone, instead of adoring in all Humility, that wise Hand that cast it. In a Word, whenever Death comes to us, we are ready to say to it as the Devils to our Saviour, *Wherefore art thou come to torment us before the time?* Matth. iii.

4. We are too much tied to this Earth; we are so united to the World, that we would willingly make here our Abode for ever, and cannot abide to hear that Death will remove us. Our Lusts have no Bounds, and we often spend ourselves in the Pursuance of these miserable Advantages. When we draw nearest to the End of our Life, and of our mortal Race, 'tis then, that many are most earnest to make large Provisions of worldly Vanities. We build stately Dwellings, and sumptuous Palaces, at that very Moment when we should think of nothing but of building our Tomb, and repairing our Winding-sheet. We have



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so violent a Passion for all the Enjoyments of this Life, that to separate us from them, is to pluck out our Hearts, and tear in pieces our tender Bowels. When Death comes to our Bed-side, and offers to pull us out, we are ready to say as the Sluggard in the *Proverbs*, *A little Sleep, a little Slumber, a little folding of the Hands*, Chap. vi. When our divine Bridegroom knocks at our Gates, we are scarce willing to abandon our Delights, as the Spouse in the *Canticles*. What, saith the Worldling, must I leave my sumptuous Palaces, my pleasant Dwellings, and my delightful Gardens? Must I relinquish all this rich Tapestry, these precious Moveables, and all these rare and exquisite Ornaments that enrich my Parlours, Chambers and Closets? Must this unmerciful Death divest me so soon of all Offices and Dignities, and hinder me from a full and peaceable Enjoyment of all these Riches and Treasures? Must it ravish from me in an Instant, all my Delights and Satisfactions? Is there no Remedy, but must I be pluck'd from the Embraces of my beloved Wife, from the Sight of my dear Children, and from the sweet Company of all my Friends? Must I receive no more the Services of my Domesticks? when we are in this unprepared State, 'tis no Wonder if Death is so terrible to us, and if it causes us to feel the Sharpness of its Sting. For as of *Absolom*, when he was hang'd by the Hair of the Head in a Tree of the Forest, *Joab* took three Darts, and struck him thro' the Heart; thus when our Affections are too much entangled with the World, and with the Expectation of earthly Contentments, 'tis then that they are miserably exposed to all the Darts and violent Attempts of Death.

5. Another principal Cause of the Fear of Death, is a wicked Life. We are plunged in the Vices and Debaucheries of the Age. We suffer ourselves to be corrupted by ill Company, and carry'd away with the Torrent of vicious Customs. 'Tis therefore no Wonder if Death fills our Souls with Apprehensions, because

cause it comes to us arm'd with our Sins, and is press'd by the Remorse of Conscience, and Horror of our Crimes. How comes it to pass that such a terrible Astonishment fell upon King *Belshazzar*, when he saw the Fingers of an Hand writing upon the Wall of his Palace, the Sentence of his Doom? *Dan.v.* 'Twas because he had prophaned the holy Vessels of God's House; and was rioting in the Society of lascivious Women. Wherefore did *Felix* tremble, when he heard St. *Paul* discourse of *Justice, Temperance, and of Judgment to come?* *Acts xxiv.* 'Twas because he was a wicked Varlet, given over to all manner of filthy and unjust living. Thus, because we prophane the Members of our Body, which are as the Vessels of God's Sanctuary; and because our Lives are vicious and disorderly, we can't abide to hear Death mention'd; and when it comes to us, we are ready to speak to it in *Felix's* Language to St. *Paul*, *Depart for this time.* So that the Love of Sin, and the Fear of Death, are as two Sisters who hold one another by the Hand; or rather, they are Twins, that are born and die together. As the Prophet *Amos* said to the *Israelites*, *Ye put far the evil Day, and cause the Seat of Violence to come near,* *Amos vi.* So we may say to the Men of this Age; Ye put as far from you as you can the Day of Death, and draw near to all manner of Impurity, Covetousness, Ambition, Pride, Vanity, Usury, Rapine, Violence, Envy, Malice, and such-like Soul-Plagues. You don't only draw near to these abominable Vices, but what is worse, you lodge them in your Bowels, and harbour them in your Hearts. Certainly we may very well apply to all vicious Persons, what the Prophet *Jeremiah* says of *Jerusalem*, *Her Filthiness is in her Skirts, she remembereth not her last End,* *Lam. i.*

6. I have taken notice of another Defect in us. We mistrust the Providence of God, and know not how to repose ourselves upon his fatherly Care. We have a too worthy Esteem of ourselves, and of our

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own Sufficiency. We cannot resolve to die, because we fancy ourselves very useful in the World, and that our Death would be a considerable Loss to the Church of God, to the State, or to our Family.

7. Because the Soul and Body are link'd together in a very strict Union; we can't imagine how they can be separated without great and unspeakable Convulsions. Our Infidelity is so great, that we cannot rest satisfied upon the Promises of God, who engages to succour us in our Distress, and to deliver us from all our Troubles, *Isa. l.* 'Tis true, *Jacob's* Ladder that reaches from the Earth to Heaven, may ravish us; but it seems very uneasy to ascend. Paradise is rich, glorious and delightful to the uttermost; but its Gate is strait, and choak'd up with Thorns and Briars.

8. I judge that one of the chief Causes of the Fear of Death is, because we look upon God as a most severe and merciless Judge, inflamed with Anger and Fury against us, and arm'd with Vengeance. Whereas we should consider and acknowledge him to be a merciful Father, full of Compassion and Kindness for Mankind. Every Slave trembles at the Sight of his Lord, and there is no Malefactor but is afraid when he appears before his Judge, to be put to the Rack. And can I, who am all spotted with Sin, and blackened with Crimes; can I appear before that glorious Throne, that causes the Seraphims to cover their Faces with their Wings? *Isa. vi.* How can I that am but Stubble, subsist in the Presence of the God of Vengeance, *who is a consuming Fire?* *Heb. x.*

9. There is another visible Fault in us, we don't embrace with a true and lively Faith, the Death and Passion of our Lord and Saviour. We all speak of Jesus Christ crucified, but we don't know the divine Virtue of his Crucifixion, nor feel its Efficacy. We don't consider that his Death hath broken down the Partition that shut us out of the heavenly Sanctuary, and that his Blood hath track'd us a Way to Paradise,



dise, and procured us an Entrance into that Place of eternal Bliss.

10. Now to prevent the Horror of the Grave, we don't consider as we ought our Lord Jesus Christ in the Tomb, and that he hath sanctified it with his Holy and Divine Presence. We don't imprint in our Imagination, that 'tis just and reasonable that we should be conformable to Christ in his Abasement, if we will have any share with him in his Glory and Exaltation.

11. Besides, that which entertains in our Souls the Fears of Death is this; we look upon it as if it were in its full Strength and Vigor. Whereas we should remember, that Jesus Christ hath overcome and disarm'd Death by his powerful Resurrection, and that for our parts, we need but follow the Footsteps of his glorious Victories, and fasten that furious Beast to his triumphant Chariot.

12. We don't consider as we should, with a serious and religious Application of Mind, how our Saviour Christ is not only risen from the Sepulchre, victorious over Death, but that he is also ascended up into the highest Heavens, as our Fore-runner, to prepare a Place for us; and that by departing out of our miserable Bodies, we follow the Paths of our ever blessed Saviour, to reap with him the Fruits of his most glorious Victories.

13. We stoop too much to consider our frail, corruptible, and mortal Nature; and we seldom enter into this most useful Meditation, that by the Holy Ghost we are nearly and inseparably united to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Life, and the Source of Light; and that we have already in us the Seeds of Blessedness, of Glory and Immortality.

14. As the Children of *Israel* murmured against *Moses* in the Desert, and wish'd to be again in *Egypt*, forgetting their bitter Slavery, under which they had groan'd, their painful labouring amongst the Bricks, and the Heat of their Furnaces, and minding only the Pleasure which they had lost. They dream'd of

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nothing but the Plenty of Bread and Flesh, of the Cucumbers, Onions, and of the Meats with which they had so often filled their Bellies. Thus we repine at Death, because we don't dream of the Evils from which it delivers us, we think only upon the vain Pleasures, and seeming Advantages of which it robs us.

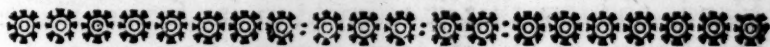
15. We imagine that Death destroys and reduces us to nothing; and we don't consider that it never meddles with the principal Part of our being, but only pulls off from us Sin, and breaks the rest of the Chains of our spiritual Bondage; so that Death is rather the Death of Sin than of the Faithful.

16. Here is another great Fault in us; we don't lift up our Minds to consider the Glory prepared for us at the egress of our Souls out of our mortal Bodies. However we may demean ourselves, and whatever we may pretend, we don't firmly, without doubting, believe the Felicities which God promiseth to us in the Contemplation of his Face. Sometimes we may think upon the Joys of Paradise; but 'tis a Thought that passes through our Souls with too much Speed, and don't take any Root. So that many, if they were not asham'd, would be ready to speak in the Emperor *Adrian's* Language, *My little Soul, my dearest Darling, O Guest and Companion of my Body, whither art thou now going?*

17. To these former Causes of the Fears of Death in us, we may add another: That we suffer our Eyes to dwell too much upon the Rottenness and Corruption that threatens our Body; whereas we should carry our Eye-sight to behold its glorious Resurrection that shall soon follow. Pleasant Abode, and delightful Companion of my Soul, must Death, this cruel Death separate it from thee with so much Violence? Must thou part with thy dear and sweet Companion? Must my Soul leave thee upon such grievous and lamentable Terms? That of so many Honours which have been heap'd upon thee, thou shalt not carry so much

as their Shadow to the Grave? That of many rich Moveables and Treasures, thou shalt bear away nothing but a Winding-sheet, a few Boards, or at the most some Pounds of Lead? After thou hast lived in so much Splendor and Magnificence, must thy covering be at last the Worms? After thou hast walked so proudly in Palaces gilded with Gold, and perfum'd, must at last thy Confinement be in a stinking and loathsome Sepulchre? Must these beautiful Eyes be clos'd? These Lips of Coral become pale? This golden Mouth be stopped? And must this dainty Flesh rot and become odious to the Eyes of the World?

18. In the last Place, we don't meditate as we ought, upon that eternal Bliss and Glory that hath been prepared for us from the Foundation of the World, and into which we shall enter, when Christ Jesus shall come from Heaven with his holy Angels, to judge both the Quick and the Dead; when he shall re-unite our Souls and Bodies together for all Eternity; that *he may be glorified in his Saints, and wonderful in all the Faithful.*



## CHAP. VII.

*The first Remedy against the Fears of Death, is to meditate often upon it.*

**W**E become acquainted with the most dreadful things by Custom and Conversation. Fresh Soldiers commonly quiver and shake at the Sight of an Enemy; they tremble at the Volleys of Shot, and half dead fall to the Ground at the terrible Noise of the great Ordinance. But when their Courage hath been hardned by a long Exercise, they can then without Fear seek the Enemy in his greatest Advantages, and can go as merrily to the Combat as to a Feast, or a Triumph. The Showers of small Shot, the



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the Lightning and Thunder of the Cannon, can't make them so much as to shut their Eyes, or stoop their Heads; they then laugh at their former Apprehensions: Thus the first Conceits of Death commonly terrify us; but when we seriously meditate upon it, and look it in the Face, we shall not only contemn it, but we shall seek it boldly in its Retreats, and with an undaunted Countenance, we shall behold Death let fly all its Arrows, and casting its Thunderbolts, without the least Apprehension. As they who are not wont to see savage Beasts, dare not draw near to them, and can scarce look upon them without Fear; but such as are familiarly acquainted with them can touch 'em without Apprehension, and freely play with 'em: Thus 'tis with them who never had any Confidence to look Death in the Face; they tremble, and are fill'd with Astonishment, as soon as they see its Approaches; but they who often behold Death, are familiarly acquainted with it, and therefore they can with Confidence thrust their Fists into its Jaws. *Moses* fled away from his Rod, when it was first turn'd into a Serpent, but when he began to take it into his Hand, and saw that it return'd to its former Shape and Being, he was far from running from it, or entertaining the least Apprehension of it; he made a very happy Use of it, and by God's Command wrought many Miracles. Thus 'tis with Death; it frights us at first; but if we can but take hold of it with the Hands of a true and lively Faith, it will be so far from scaring or frightening us, that it will discover to us a World of delightful Wonders.

Death therefore is so far from terrifying such as are accustom'd to it, that it fills them full of Comfort and Joy. As a Child that looks upon the Father who hath a Vizard on its Face, is frighted, and begins to cry; but if he hath but the Confidence to pull off the Vizard, and take but notice of the loving Smiles of his Parent hid under that Deformity, he will not only cease from Weeping, and settle his Mind, but he

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he will also leap for Joy and embrace him. Thus if we look upon Death with a timorous Countenance, and behold its hideous Appearance, we shall be struck with a sudden Horror ; but if we can with any Assurance lift up its Vizard, we shall soon discover our heavenly Father, and with Tears of Joy we shall run to embrace him. As the Apostles when they espied Jesus Christ in the Night walking upon the Waves of the Sea, cried out in a Fright, thinking that it had been a Spirit, but when he drew near to them, and they heard his Voice, they perceived him to be their Saviour ; when therefore they had received him into their Ship, the Storm ceas'd immediately. Thus if we look upon Death at a Distance, the Blindness and Ignorance with which we are possessed, will represent to us a frightful Spirit ; but if we examine and behold it nearer, by the Help of the Gospel Light, we shall find it to be our Salvation, and the accomplishing of our Redemption. All our Fears will then be calm'd, and our Souls will return to their former Temper. In a Word, as he that runs from his Enemy, encreases his Courage, and renders him more earnest and resolv'd to pursue him ; thus when Death sees us tremble and decline its Approaches, it becomes more proud and imperious over us. We must therefore think betimes of Death, represent to ourselves continually, and enter into an Acquaintance with it. It was holy Job's Practice ; for he *cried unto the Pit, Thou art my Father, and to Corruption and Worms, ye are my Mother and my Sister*, Job xvi. And imagine that this was the chief Reason of Philip of Macedon's commanding a Page every Morning to rouse him out of his Sleep, with, *O King, remember thou art a mortal Man*. For by this often repeated Lesson, he labour'd to humble his lofty Mind, and teach his frail Nature not to glory so much in the Splendor of his Crown and Sceptre, nor to abuse the Power committed to his Trust. By this means also he became acquainted with Death, that it might not seem strange when it should  
come

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come in earnest and snatch him away. This was also the Design of the Emperor *Meruan*, or *Meruanes*, who caus'd this Motto to be engrav'd upon his Seal, *Remember that thou must die*. These Words minded him of that which his Courtiers were afraid to mention to him. So that this great Prince never confirm'd with his Seal the Death of any man; but at the same time he represented to himself, that his own Death was not to be avoided. For the same Reason, the Noblemen of *China* are wont to have their Coffins ready made in their Chambers, that at every Moment they might look Death in the Face. And for that Intent, the *Egyptians* in their most sumptuous Feasts, commonly placed a dead Man's Skull in an eminent Corner of the Room. By this Spectacle they intended not only to oblige the Guests to moderate their Joys, and to restrain their unruly Lusts, but also to bring them acquainted with, and to accustom them to behold Death amongst all their Delights. They treated it as if their Design had been to invite it to their most delicious Feast, that they might rejoyce together with it, *John xvi*. I conceive that the *Jews* for the same Cause built their Sepulchres in their Gardens of Pleasure, that they also might have the Image of Death continually before them, and that in the midst of all their Divertisements, it might be their most pleasant and ordinary Entertainment. For us Christians to oblige us to think upon Death, there is no need that a Page should remember us every Day that we are mortal, nor that the Motto of a Ring should call to our Mind that we must die; there is no need of a Coffin to be placed in our Chambers; in such things there is many times more Ostentation than Piety; nor is it needful that a dead Man's Skull be put before our Eyes, or that a Sepulchre be built or hewn in our Gardens and Places of Recreation and Delight. For as *Alexander* the Great understood that he was a Mortal, by the Blood that run out of his Wounds: Thus the Diseases unto which we are subject,



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subject, and the daily Infirmities that we feel, sufficiently instruct and assure us that we are Mortals: And as a famous Philosopher, when he received the unhappy News of his only Son's untimely Death, answer'd the Messenger with a settled Countenance; *I knew*, said he, *that I begot him a mortal Man*, Xenoph. Thus will the Faithful say without Change of Countenance, or Appearance of Fear when his Death is declar'd to him, I knew that my Mother had conceiv'd me a mortal Man. I knew very well that Death is the Tribute that we must all pay to Nature, and that upon this Condition I am entered into the World.

If we will make use of any exterior Help to imprint this Lesson into our Fancy, we must practise with Care the Advice of the Wise-Man; *It is better to go to the House of Mourning, than to that of Feasting*, Eccles. vii. *for that is the end of all Men, and the living will lay it to his Heart*. Never look upon a deceased Body stretch'd upon a Bed, or upon a dead Corpse in a Coffin, but remember that this is an universal Law unto which all Mankind must pay Obedience; that it is the broad Road of all the Earth, and that there thou mayst behold the lively Image of thy future State. I conceive this may be a good Expedient, and very successful to entertain in our Minds the continual Thoughts of Death, to make our last Will be-times, and frequently to peruse it; for as when we meditate upon a Farewel that we are to take of our Friends, we feel in our Souls the same Affections and Motions as are in us at the Moment of our Separation: Thus will it be with us when we seriously meditate upon that last Farewel that we are to bid to the World. Death will seem to appear upon our Lips, or rather we shall think ourselves already in the sweet Embraces of our divine Jesus, our glorious Redeemer.

Besides those things that are extraordinary, I find nothing in, or out of us, nothing that we feel, taste, or relish; in short, nothing that passeth  
either

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either in our private or publick Conversation, but is able to recal to our Minds the serious Consideration of Death. The Flesh that thou dost eat, the Wool that cloaths thy Nakedness, the Silk that adorns thy Body; in general, all thy Garments and Ornaments are but the Spoils of the dead Creatures. The Sight therefore of all these Things, must call to Remembrance thy frail and mortal State, and cause thee to meditate upon the Preacher's Saying, *The same Accident that happens to the Beasts, the same happens to Mankind; as is the Death of the one, so is the Death of the other. They have all the same Breath, and Man hath no Advantage above a Beast; for all is Vanity, all goes to the same Place, all proceeds from the Dust, and shall return to the Dust again.*

Never pull off thy Cloaths, but remember that thou must shortly quit this miserable Body, and lay it down in the Grave. When thou art entring into thy Bed, think upon the Sepulchre where thou must one Day be stretch'd. If thou dost awake in the Night, consider that Death will shortly come, and put out the Taper of thy Life. Let thy Sleep be an Image of thy Death, and let it call to thy Mind, how thou must within a few Days sleep in a Bed of Dust. When thou awak'st, think upon the delightful Sound of the Arch-Angel's Trumpet, that shall rouse thee out of Death's long Sleep; say within thyself when thou arisest, It may be that I shall never rise again till the Son of God shall come from Heaven, to lift me out of the Grave with his Almighty Hand. When we cast our Eyes upon the rising Sun, let us say within ourselves, It may be I shall never behold any other Sun rise again but the Sun of Righteousness, that carries Healing under his Wings. Consider, when thou put'st on thy Garments, that the time is coming, when thou must be cloath'd with a more magnificent and glorious Robe, a Robe of Light and Immortality. When thou sittest down to eat, think upon the Hour that is drawing near, in which Death will feed upon thy Carcase; imagine  
that

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that it may be, that this is the last time that thou shalt sit at the Table, that next thou may'st sit with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, with all the blessed Martyrs, who have wash'd and whiten'd their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb; and that it may be that thou shalt never taste any more but of the Food of Angels, and of the Fruit of the Tree of Life, and that thou shalt never drink but of the new Wine in the Kingdom of Heaven, and of the Rivers of eternal Pleasures, that run from the Throne of God.

Every Night that thou goest out of the Dwelling, or changeest thy Abode, fancy to thyself that in a little Time thou must depart out of this mortal Tabernacle. Art thou alone, and separated from human Society? Remember that within a few Days Death will separate and divide thee. Art thou going to any Meeting, or entering into any Company, or marching to the holy Assemblies, discourse with thyself in this Manner: It may be that I shall never go into any other Company, until I come to the Church and Congregation of the First-born, whose Names are written in Heaven. Art thou invited to the Marriage of a Friend? Say unto thy Soul, It may be I shall never go to any other Feast, but to the Marriage of the Lamb, offer'd from the Foundation of the World. Dost thou see a rich and glorious Palace, or a pleasant Garden? Say to thyself, It may be I shall never see any other Palace, but that where the living God dwells; and it may be I shall never behold any other Place of Pleasure, but the celestial Paradise.

If thou castest down thine Eyes to look upon the Earth, upon which thou treadest, consider at the same time, that this Earth, or something like to it, shall afford thee a Grave, and that thou shalt sleep there the Sleep of Death. Remember what God told *Adam*, *Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return*, Gen. iii. Or say with the holy Man *Job*, *Remember, I pray thee, that thou hast formed me of Clay, and that thou shalt reduce me to Dust, I shall sleep in the Dust, and if thou seekest for me in the Morning, I shall be no more*, Job xx. Job vii.

If



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If thou takest a View of the Plants, of the Herbs and Flowers, don't forget what the Word of God speaks concerning our Life, in the xc<sup>th</sup> Psalm, That *Man is like the Grass which groweth up; in the morning it flourisheth and is green, in the Evening, 'tis cut down and withered.* And in the cxxx<sup>th</sup> Psalm, *As for Man, his Days are as Grass; as the Flowers of the Field, so he flourisheth: For the Wind passeth over it, and 'tis gone, and the Place thereof shall know it no more.* And elsewhere, *All Flesh is like Grass, and the Glory of Man like the Flower of the Field,* Isa. xl. 1 Pet. i.

If thou takest notice of the Shadow of the Needle in a Dial, that follows the swift Motion of the Sun, or of the Shadows which solid Bodies cast upon the Earth; in the Evening they stretch a great way, and a little after vanish: Consider seriously, and engrave in thy Mind this excellent Sentence, *Man is like Vanity, his Days are as a shadow that passeth away,* Psal. cxliv. and say as David, *I am gone as a shadow when it inclineth,* Psal. cix.

If thou hearest the Whistling of the Winds, which God taketh out of his Store-Houses, lift up thy Soul unto God thy Creator, and say with Job, Chap. vii. *Remember that my Life is but a Wind, mine Eye shall see no more good;* that is, the imaginary Good of this miserable World. And elsewhere, *Thou liftest me up to the Wind, thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my Substance,* Chap. xxx.

If thou lookest upon the Glory and Beauty of the Heavens, and beholdest the ravishing Sight of the Stars; consider that thy gracious God hath formed thee after his Image; not to continue always among this slimy and miserable Earth, but to dwell with him for ever in the Heavens; and that at the End of the Race he will raise and carry thee into the Palace of his Glory, where thou shalt shine as the Sun in its greatest Splendor.

If thou dost meditate upon the Changeableness of the Seasons, remember that the Spring of thy Infancy, the

the hot Summer of thy Youth, the Autumn of thy Maturity, and sad countenanced Winter of thy cold and decrepit Age, shall succeed one another in the same Order.

Let him who travels by Land, think upon *Job's* Complaint, *My Days have been swifter than a Post, they flee away, they see no Good*, *Job ix.* Let him call to mind the Apostle's excellent Saying, *This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before; I press forward toward the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God, through Christ Jesus*, *Phil. iii. 13.*

Let him who sails upon the Sea, fancy the whole World as a great Sea, swelling with Waves, our Life as a dangerous Voyage, and our Days as Ships that pass away in a Moment; and let him consider that the last Wind of Death will drive us into the Haven of eternal Felicity, to the Enjoyments of immortal Glory, *Job ix.*

Doth God bless us with Children? Let us understand that we are minded by them of our Mortality, for they come to take our Room, and to succeed in our Estate: Doth God take them away to his Rest, and of whom we are most fond? Let this advertise us, That God intends thereby to cut off all the lower Roots that tie us to this Earth, to unloose our Hearts and Affections, that we may offer them up to him alone, instead of spending our Lives in Tears, and indulging our foolish Humours in needless Displeasures; let us comfort ourselves with this Consideration, That by this Means a part of ourselves is entered into Heaven, and that t'other part will follow apace. Let us say, with *David*, *We shall go to them, but they shall not return to us.*

Let the Magistrate, whenever he delivers his Vote, or pronounces a Sentence, be provided with this Consideration; That he who sits in the Judgment-Seat here below, shall stand at the Bar, and be judg'd himself above: That one Day he shall appear as a poor Pri-

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soner at the Tribunal of his Great God. That the Books will be opened, and that the universal Judge of the World will pursue every particular of his Accusation: That he must render an Account not only of his Words and Actions, but also of his most secret Thoughts; and that without Examination at the Rack, God will discover the very Secrets of his Heart.

Let the Gentleman, whenever he receives his Rents and his Revenues, call to mind the Tribute that he must needs pay to Death. Let the Prince and the Lord, when he handles his Royal Patents, and his ancient Charters, or when he examines the Homage and Duties to be paid to his House and Family, take notice that he must go in Person to Heaven's Gates, and pay his Homage to the Divinity. Let the King, who sits in his Seat of Justice, or Chair of State, think upon the Throne of the King of Kings, before which he must appear, as well as the most wretched Slave, and the meanest of his Subjects; and that he must be accountable to a just God, who is no Respecter of Persons.

Let the Minister be never employed about the Duties of his Function, but let him long and wish for that happy Day, in which the Lamb shall instruct and feed him in Person, and lead him to the Fountains of living Water.

Let the Christian Soldier engrave upon his Sword this Sentence of *Job*, *Is there not, as it were, a Warfare appointed for all Mortals upon Earth?* *Job vii.* And, instead of thirsting after human Blood, let him prepare to encounter Death itself.

Let the Husbandman, whenever he sows his Seed, or when he reaps the Corn of his Fields, be mindful of the Season that comes on apace, in which his Body must rot in the Earth, that it may grow up to Eternity. Let him meditate upon what *St. Paul* saith, *O Fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die, 1 Cor. xv.* And let him meditate upon *David's* comfortable Persuasion, *They who sow in Tears, shall reap with Songs of Triumph.* Let



Let any Handycrafts Man that works in his Shop, imprint in his Mind this excellent Sentence, *Our Days are like the Days of an Hireling*; and when he hath ended his Task, and is departing to his Rest, let him comfort himself with this Assurance, that as soon as he shall have ended that Work that God hath given him to do, he shall rest from all his Labours, *Job vii.*

Whenever the Physician visits the Patient, or when the Surgeon dresses the Wounds, let them consider that they have no Secret or Art able to protect them from Death, or to cure the Breaches that it makes in our corruptible Nature.

Let the most cunning Lawyers the most advised Counsellors, and the most eloquent Orators, remember that all their Rhetorick and Subtilty will never obtain for them their Suit against Death, nor procure a Moment of Respite or Delay.

And let the most learned Philosophers learn, *That the soundest Philosophy is the Meditation of Death.*

In short, whatever be our Imployment, Condition, or Age, let us lift up our Minds and Hands unto God to speak to him in the Language of the Prophet *David*; *Lord, let me know my End, and the Number of my Days, that I may know how long I am to live*; or of *Moses*, *So teach us to number our Days, that we may apply our Hearts unto Wisdom.*

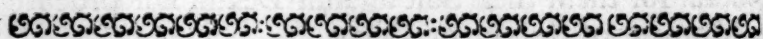


### A Prayer and Meditation on our Mortality.

**O** My God and heavenly Father, since 'tis thy Pleasure that I should be mortal, and that my Body should return to the Dust; Grant me Grace to be always mindful of my frail Condition, and seriously to reflect upon the several Changes of Times, the Variety of Seasons, the Unconstancy of the World, and Alterations I meet with, as Mementos of my last Change and Departure. Let my Infirmities, and frequent Distempers be look'd upon as

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*so many Messengers sent to summon and warn me that I must shortly leave this Tabernacle. Let the Bed I rest on call to my Mind, that when all the Business of my Life shall be finished, I must lie down and rest in a Bed of Dust. Let the Garments that I cast off at Night, the Sleep that benumbs my Senses, the Tombs of my Predecessors, Forefathers and Friends, refresh in me the Thoughts of my Departure to my last Home. Gracious God, give me Grace so often to look upon Death and the Grave, that I may be acquainted with them, and that they may not fright or terrify, but comfort me; for tho' I know that I am born to die, I know also this, that Death shall introduce me into the Presence of my God, the only Author of Life and Happiness, to live for ever with him in Bliss, Amen.*



### CH A P. VIII.

*The second Remedy against the Fears of Death, is, to expect it every Moment.*

**T**IS not sufficient to think often upon Death, and to discourse of it in a pathetick manner; and there be some that frequently mention Death with many pious Reflections; yet nevertheless they cannot boast of being free from all Apprehensions of it. Their Tongue is always ready to speak of Death, but their Heart cannot yield to expect it. They know that Death will seize upon them, but they entertain this dangerous Opinion, that the Time is not yet come; they acknowledge that they are indebted to God and Nature, but they delay the Payment of the Debt from Day to Day, as if they were able to corrupt the Sergeants of Death, and obtain a Reprieve at their Pleasure. There's no Man so old and decrepit, but flatters himself with the Fancy of having as yet at least a Year to live in the World. In short, we imagine always, that we perceive Death at a vast Distance from us, and that

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that we shall at our Leisure prepare ourselves to receive it as we ought. Therefore whenever, or wherever it comes to drag us out of the World, it surprizeth and astonisheth us.

To prevent this Mischief, we must not only consider that we are mortal, but that our Life is short and of no long Continuance; we must continually say with *Job*, *Are not my Days few?* *Job* x. And imprint in our Minds this Sentence of *David's*, *The Lord hath made my Days as an Hand's-breadth, mine Age is as nothing before him*, *Psal.* xxxix. Or that of *Moses*, *The best of our Days are but Labour and Sorrow; for they are soon cut off, and we fly away*, *Psal.* xc.

The Ancients painted *Time* with Wings to express its unavoidable Swiftnefs. The Holy Spirit compares our Life to a Weaver's Shuttle, to an hir'd Servant, to a Post that runs apace, to a Packet-boat, or to an Eagle that flies after its Prey. The sacred Writers speak of our Life as of a Torrent of Waters, of a Cloud, a Vapour, a Wind, or a Breath. They tell us, that our Days are gone as a Dream, they fly away as a Shadow, they vanish as a Word in the Air, and that they perish as a Thought. In a Word, all the lightest and the most unconstant things in the World, whereof the Motion is very sudden and quick, are employ'd in holy Scripture, to express the Vanity of our Life, and Shortnefs of our Days.

Besides that our Life is of a short Continuance, it slides away insensibly, like a Clock, the Wheels move without ceasing, altho' the Hand appears to us to be steady; or to a Plant that grows continually, altho' the Increase and Growth is not to be discern'd by our Eye-sight; or like to a Man who stands in a Ship under Sail, he goes forward whether he will or no. Thus whether we sleep or wake, whether we go or lie down, whether we eat or fast, whether we work or rest, we proceed on continually forward towards our Grave. Our Body is like a Tree eaten continually by Worms; for Day and Night they feed



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upon it without Intermission. In vain do ye banish out of your Minds the Thoughts of Death ; if ye will not call it to your Remembrance, it will not fail to mind and remember you. The more ye fly from it, the more it follows and pursues you at the Heels ; and when ye imagine Death to be farthest off from you, 'tis nearest to you.

As the Cancer when it infects and enters into the Breast, devours the Flesh without Interruption, so *Time* consumes and devours us continually. The Meat that we swallow, and nourisheth us, brings us by Degrees into the Embraces of Death, as the Oyl that causeth a Lamp to burn, brings it to an end ; or as when a Torch is lighted, it begins to decay, as soon as it begins to burn ; thus I may say without Mistake, that the very first Moment of this Animal Life is the first Moment of our Death. And as we say of all sublunary Bodies, that the Generation of the one is the Destruction of the other ; so 'tis with *Time*, the Birth of one Hour, of a Day, of a Week, of a Month, of a Year, is the End of that which precedes. 'Tis like a Wheel that mounts to no other End but to fall down again.

Since therefore our Life is nothing else but a continu'd Death in proper Terms, we are mistaken to name only the Moment of the Separation of the Soul and Body, the Hour of Death. For as when many Cannon Shot are charged against a Castle to open a Breach, we don't say that the last hath done the Work : Or as when a hard Stone is cut with a Chissel and Hammer, or insensibly carved and undermined with Water, the last Blow or Drop don't carry away alone the Glory of the Performance : Thus when our Bodies decay and crumble away to Dust, we must not only consider the last Strugglings against Death, or the last Attempt of this Enemy. Of a Ladder where we ascend and descend, we view every Step from the Top to the Bottom : Of an Hour-glass we look to every Grain of Sand ; of a Journey, we reckon the first League as well as the last ; and in a Race, we take notice of the first Step

Step that we go out as well as that when we stopt: Thus we must reckon our Death to begin from the first Moment that we draw our Breath, until the last when we yield up the Ghost.

Besides what happens every Moment to this poor and despicable Nature, an infinite Number of strange, unlucky, and unexpected Accidents stop and shorten our Race. The Taper is not always consumed by its own Flame, many unkind Blasts and Showers extinguish it. If our Life is short, 'tis no less weak and uncertain. The Body in which we lead a languishing Life, is like *Jonas's* Gourd: For if it be but mov'd with a contrary and unwholsome Wind, or touch'd by an unhappy Worm, it withers upon a sudden, *Jo. iv.* This was the Thought of *Eliphaz*, when he said, *We dwell in Houses of Clay, our Foundation is in the Dust, we are crush'd before the Moth, Job iv.* When God intends to destroy Mankind in his Wrath, and kill Multitudes in his Displeasure, he doth not always commission an Angel as his Agent, as in the Case of the First-born of *Egypt*; as when he stretch'd forth the Sword of his Vengeance upon *Jerusalem*, and as when he cut off *Sennacherib's* Army in one Night, One hundred fourscore and five thousand Men. He doth not always let loose the wicked Spirits, as when he gave them leave to raise a furious Tempest, which cast to the Ground the House where *Job's* Children were bury'd in the Ruins, *Job i.* He opens not always the Fountains of Heaven, as when he wash'd away the first wicked World with a fearful Deluge, *Gen. vii.* He causeth not always Fire and Brimstone to rain from Heaven, as upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, upon *Admah* and *Zeboim*. He works not always Miracles in the Waters, as when he drown'd *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptian* Host in the Waters of the *Red-Sea*. He prepares not always Whales to devour us, as he did *Jonas*. He sends not always burning Serpents, as to the murmuring Generation of the *Israelites* in the Desarts. He commands not always the Earth to open and swallow us up, as he did *Corah, Dathan*

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and *Abiram*. He sends not always from above great Hailstones, as when he knock'd down the *Amorites*. He destroys not always by Flames that proceed from his Presence, as he did *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who offer'd unhallowed Fire upon his Altar. He commands not always the Lions and Bears of the Forest to issue out and devour us, as he did when the rebellious Prophet was kill'd, and when the ill-tutor'd Children of *Bethel* mock'd *Elisba*. In short, God employs not always the Plagues and Judgments of Pestilence, of War, and of Famine; the unpleasant Smell of a fuming Snuff, a flying Vapour of a malignant Smoak, is able to choak us, or kill us in a Moment; a Fly, the Kernel of an Apple, an Hair of the Head, or the Seed of a Grape, or Ashes or Sand, or some other Atom, may stop the Breath of our Life. Therefore God adviseth us by the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Cease ye from Man whose Breath is in his Nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Isa. ii.

'Tis to be consider'd, that these Contingencies happen very frequently, and in every Place Death lays for us its Snares, as well in the Bosom of our tender-hearted Parents, and in the Embraces of our dearest Friends, as amongst our most mortal Enemies. Its invisible Darts fly every where, and as the Psalmist informs us, *The Pestilence walketh in Darknes, and Destruction wasteth at Noon-day*, Psal. xci. Death is busy on the solemn Festivals, as well as on the Working-days; it drags us as easily from the Table where we take our Delights, as from the Bed of Sorrow, where we sigh and groan. There is no secret Retreat where we may find a Refuge; it hath no more Regard of the Temples dedicated to God's Service, than of the common Houses. All the Riches of *America*, and the Power of the greatest Monarch, are not able to protect us from its Pursuit; it requires a present Payment of the Debts that we owe, and 'tis not possible to appear by Deputy at the Summons that it sends to us.

Death



Death claps his Summons on the Posts of the Door, it trusts them not in the Hands of Messengers, or Lacquies; there is no Warning, but it may write down upon it these Words, *speaking to him in Prison*. It surprizes us at home and abroad, in our Closets and in the Streets, in our Beds, in our Sedans, in the midst of our Feasts, and all our Pomp. It offers Violence to the sacred Person of the greatest Kings in their most sumptuous Palaces, in their most flourishing Cities, in their strongest Fortifications, in the midst of their most faithful Subjects, and most victorious Armies, upon their Thrones, and in their triumphant Chariots. As King *Abab* when he was going to take Possession of *Naboth's* Vineyard, told the Prophet *Elijah* in a Rage, *Hast thou found me, mine Enemy?* 1 Kings xxi. Thus when the profane Worldlings dream of nothing but of the pleasant Enjoyment of their unjust Possessions, and swimming in the Blood and Sweat of the meaner People, they meet unexpected Death, which they curse in their Hearts; and if it did not stop their Mouths, they would say also in a Rage, *Hast thou found me out, mine Enemy?*

This holy Meditation caused the best King upon Earth to tell us, *Man knoweth not his time; as the Fishes that are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are caught in a Snare, so are the Sons of Men snared in an evil time, when it falls suddenly upon them*, Eccles. ix. 12. This same Consideration caused this excellent Sentence to be written in the Book of *Job*, *in a Moment shall they die, and the People shall be troubled at Midnight, and pass away, and the Mighty shall be taken without Hand*, Job xxxiv. that is, that to destroy Kingdoms and whole Nations, and to carry away the most lusty and mighty Men, Death has no need of any other Assistance but its own Arm.

Do you desire, Christian Reader, to understand the Result of this Discourse; Let me tell you, that since Death is certain, and not to be avoided, and that there's nothing so uncertain as the Hour of its Arrival, we ought so to live, as if we were to breathe forth the  
last

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last Gasp at every Moment. We should behave ourselves, as if we had always our Souls upon our Lips, ready to yield them into the Hands of our great Creator, and to speak in *Job's* Language, *Having our Flesh between our Teeth, and our Souls in our Hands*, *Job* xiii. In Regard we know not at what time, nor in what Place Death intends to come upon us, let us expect it at every Moment, and in every Place. And as we lodge in this *Earthly Tabernacle*, without any Term prefix'd, let us be ready to depart at the first Warning. For it will be far better for us to go out willingly, than to be dragg'd out against our Will. 'Tis not convenient that Death should carry us away in the same manner as the Sea beats and tosses a dead Corps upon its Waves. But we must on this Occasion imitate the discreet Mariner, that trims his Sails, and helps by his Art the Winds and the Tide to carry him to his desired Haven. We should not follow Death as the Malefactor follows the Executioner who drags him to suffer; but as the Child follows his Father who conducts him to a Feast. We should not engage in a Combat with Death by Constraint, as the ancient Slaves with the wild Beasts in the *Roman Amphitheatres*; but we should imitate *David's* Courage, who, of his own Accord, march'd out of the Camp of *Israel* to fight with *Goliath*: 'Tis better for us to attack and seize upon Death, than to be surpriz'd and devour'd by it unawares.

Come when thou wilt, O Death! Thou shalt never surprize me; for I wait for thee at every Moment, with my Weapons ready in my Hand. Thou shalt never drag me forcibly, for I will follow thee willingly and joyfully. Tho' thou art my Enemy, yet will I speak to thee in the Language of the Spouse in the *Canticles* to her beloved, *Draw me and I will run after thee*. Nay, I will meet thee in the Way, and receive thee with hearty Embraces; for instead of dreading thy coming, I desire it passionately, and hope for it. For at the first Arrival, as soon as I have seen thee, I shall overcome thee. O blessed and happy Day, that promiseth me such a glorious Victory, and such an eternal Triumph!

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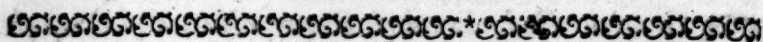
A Prayer and Meditation upon the continual Expectation of Death.

O Gracious God, in whose Power alone, and at whose Pleasure are the Times and the Seasons; I know that 'tis appointed to all Men once to die, and that the Grave is the dwelling which thou hast prepared to receive all Mankind. We understand sufficiently by the Experience of former Ages, that none is able to say, I shall live, and shall not see Death. Thou, O Almighty God, our supreme Judge, hast pronounc'd our irrevocable Sentence in the earthly Paradise, that we must die; so that I should be guilty of the greatest Folly, if I did not firmly believe that I must die as others, and follow at my turn in the way of all Flesh. But, Lord, thou hast been pleased to hide from us the Issues of thy Providence, and dost not suffer us to see the Hand that marks out the last Hours of our Life. We can perceive no Shadow to discover to us with Certainty, when shall be the going down of our Sun; we know not at what Hour of the Day or of the Night thou wilt call us to appear before thy great Tribunal. Give me therefore Grace, O merciful God, to be always ready to answer to thy Call, and to obey thy holy Commands; that I may be as a Ship at Anchor, that stays only for a Wind to set sail; or as a Soldier, who waits only for the Signal to march to the Encounter. Give me Grace, O good Lord, that I may be like the good and faithful Servant, who expects his Master's coming, and hears his Voice as soon as he calls; or like the wise Virgins, who are ready to meet the Bridegroom, and to follow him to the Marriage Chamber. Since I am not to know either the Time or the Place when Death will come to me, O that I might expect and wait for it every Moment, and at every Place! O that I might live in such a Manner, that I may be always ready to die! That my Soul were always upon my Lips, prepar'd to fly away! That I were continually in Readiness to commit it into thy Hands, O my God, my faithful and merciful Creator! By this means I shall receive Death with Joy, when it comes



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*comes as thy Servant and Messenger ; and I shall follow it willingly, being certainly persuaded that it will lead me into eternal Life, and transport me into thy glorious and immortal Palace, Amen.*



### C H A P. IX.

*The Third Remedy against the Fears of Death, is to consider that God hath appointed the Time and Manner of our Death.*

**W**E are either Hypocrites who draw near unto God with our Lips, and honour him with our Tongues, whilst our Heart is far from him, *Mat. xiv.* or we must desire the Accomplishment of the Will of God, and resign ourselves wholly to it; for every Day we say unto him in our Prayers, *Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven*; therefore we cannot abhor nor fly from Death so cowardly, if we be rightly persuaded as we ought, that God hath limited the time and appointed the Manner of our Death. That which causes us to complain of this last Enemy, is a continual Eye that we have fixed upon the Power of the Flesh, and a too great Confidence upon second Causes. We are like the Dog that bites at the Stone that strikes him, for we commonly curse the Means that God employs to call and withdraw us out of the World.

It will easily appear that God hath numbred our Days, and that by his wonderful and eternal Wisdom, he hath decreed the Hour and Moment of every Man's Death. For besides what our Saviour Christ saith in general, *That God hath reserv'd the Times and the Seasons in his own Power*, *Acts i.* *Job* tell us expressly, *The Days of Man are determin'd, the Number of his Months are with thee, thou hast appointed his Bounds that he cannot pass*, *Job xiv.* The Royal Prophet speaks to the same Purpose in the xxxixth Psalm, *I trust in thee, O Lord, I said,*

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said thou art my God, my times are in thy Hand. He is of the same Judgment in the xixth Psalm, *Behold thou hast made my Day as a Hand-breadth.* And in the lxviiiith Psalm, *Unto God the Lord belong the Issues of Death.* He also teacheth us the same Lesson in his divine Hymn, Psal. xc. for when he had represented how that it is God who reduceth Man to Ashes, and maketh him return to his first Substance, he tells us, speaking unto God, *Thou turnest Man to Destruction, and sayest, return again, ye Children of Men.*

King Hezekiah's Comparison is very notable; he compareth the Life of Man to a Thread that God hath twisted, and that he cuts off at his Pleasure, *Isa. xxxviii.* Mine Age is departed, and removed from me as a Shepherd's Tent; I have cut off, like a Weaver, my Life, he will cut me off with pining Sicknefs, from Day even to Night wilt thou make an end of me. *Hannah, Samuel's Mother,* removes all Difficulty, and confirms this Truth sufficiently, *2 Sam. ii.* 'Tis God saith she, *who killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.* There is nothing more significant to the same Purpose, than our Lord and Saviour's Words, *I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the Keyes of Hell and Death,* Revel. This great God and Saviour closeth the Gates of the Grave when he pleaseth, and 'tis not possible to open them against his Will; In short, *Whether we live, we live to the Lord, whether we die, we die to the Lord, whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's,* Rom. xiv.

And our Reason being enlightned with divine Revelation, teacheth us this good and profitable Lesson; for if God hath a Hand in our Conception and Birth, and if he appoints the time of our Entrance into the World, wherefore should not he also have an Hand in our Death, and mark out the time of our Departure? *David* speaks thus to God in the cxxxixth Psalm. *my Substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought, in the lowest parts of the Earth: Thine Eyes*

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*Eyes did see my Substance yet being imperfect, and in thy Book all my Members are written, which in Continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.* We may therefore speak unto God in the same Language; my Substance shall not be hid from thee, when this miserable Body shall fall to pieces, as rotten Wood, and as a Moth-eaten Garment; thine Eyes shall see me, when Death shall cut off the Thread of my Life, and separate what thou hast joined together so wonderfully by thy Power and Wisdom: Thy Providence shall dispose of me at my Departure, and nothing shall happen to me but that which thou hast fore-ordain'd in thine unsearchable Decrees.

If God appoints the time of our *Resurrection*, and if it be certain, that without his express Commission, the holy Spirit will not breathe upon our dry Bones to cause them to revive; 'tis not probable that our Breath should depart out of our Nostrils, and our Bodies should fall into the Bed of Corruption, without the Orders of the great and living God, *Ezek. xxxvii.* He hath appointed the Sun its Course, and to the Stars that shine in the Heavens, their several Motions and Stations, *Isa. xl.* And should he not also appoint to his Children their Motions, since they are to shine for ever in the Heaven of Heavens, where Righteousness dwells as so many immortal Stars; He hath measured the Water in his Hand; he hath compassed the Heavens with his Span; he hath weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills with a Balance; he hath fashion'd the Earth with his Hands, and given Bounds to the roaring Sea; and is it possible that he hath not measured the time of our Life, and that he hath not mark'd out with his Finger the last Moment? He who hath numbered the Kingdom of the Heathen Princes, hath he not also numbred the Days in the which he intends to reign in our Hearts by his Holy Spirit? Hath he not appointed the time for us to ascend up into the highest Heavens, where we are to reign with him in the Kingdom of his Glory?

If



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If it be certain that God hath numbred the Hairs of our Head, *Mat. x.* 'tis not to be doubted but that he hath also numbred the Days of our Life. And if a Sparrow fall not to the Ground without his Order, how can it be that a Man can take his Flight up to Heaven without his exprefs Commission? He bottles up our Tears, he keeps a Record of all our Afflictions, and takes an Account of our Sorrows, *Pfal. l.* and can we imagine that he doth not keep an Account of the Life and Death of Men, and that he minds not the time that we are to spend in the Valley of Tears? He takes notice of our up-rising, and of our down-sitting, he compasseth thee round about whither thou dost stop or go, *Pfal. lix.* And can it be conceived but that he observes thy rising at thy Birth, the several Passages of thy Life, and thy going down at thy Death?

In short, If God hath appointed in his eternal Counsel, the Continuance of the great World; he hath also, without doubt, limited the Life of Man, the little World, and the Image and Compendium of the great, as our Lord and Saviour teaches us. Man is not able by his solicitous Care to add one Cubit to his Stature, and our Experience sufficiently demonstrates that we cannot add a Year, a Day, or a Moment, by all our Labour and Industry, to the continuance of our Life.

If Life and Death were not in God's Hand, there would be nothing settled, or constant, either in the Kingdoms of the World, or in the Church of Christ. The Prophets would be often found in grievous Errors, and the eternal Election would be totally abolished; for the most weighty Affairs of a Common-wealth depend upon the Life of Princes. The Death of one Man is able to turn an Empire upside down, and to change the State of the Kingdom. If *Alexander the Great* had been stifled in his Cradle, what would become of the Prophecy of *Daniel*, who declared the glorious Victories that this Prince should obtain against King *Darius*, the *Persian* Monarch, under the Emblem of an He-Goat that should run at a Ram with all his Might?  
that

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that should break his two Horns and trample him under his Feet ; and if King *Cyrus* had dy'd before the obtaining of the Kingdom of *Babylon*, how should *Isaiab's* Prophecy been accomplish'd ? For he paints out this young Conqueror in his most lively Colours, and calls him by his Name in this Expression, *I have said of Cyrus, he is my Shepherd, and shall perform all my Pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built ; and to the Temple, thy Foundation shall be laid, Isa. xliv.*

If the Devil could have destroy'd *St. Paul's* Life before his Journey to *Damascus*, where he was strangely converted by a Miracle, how could God's immutable Decree be accomplish'd ; for he had design'd him from his Mother's Womb, to be a noble Vessel of his Grace and Mercy, and a faithful Ambassador of his Son, *Gal. i.* If the penitent Thief had died before he had seen the Light, or if he had been kill'd in one of his Robberies, how could he have been converted upon the Cross, where he repented of his Crimes ; or how could he have heard from our Saviour these blessed and comfortable Words, *Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt be with me this Day in Paradise ? Luke xxiii.*

The Heathens have perceived and understood this Truth, but they have darken'd and defac'd it by their impertinent and ridiculous Fictions : For their Poets tell us, there are Three *Parcæ*, or infernal Goddeffes ; the one holds the Distaff, and spins ; the other winds up the Thread ; the third cuts it, and puts a Period thereby to the Life of Man. By this Fable they intend to teach us, that God lengthens or shortens at his Pleasure Man's Life. As 'tis therefore certain that God has numbred our Days, he hath also appointed, in his infinite Wisdom, the Means to convey us out of the World. If one dies in Peace, another is kill'd in War ; if one departs in his Bed, another is hang'd upon a Gibbet ; if one perishes with Famine, another is stifled with the Plague ; if one is struck with Thunder, the other is torn in pieces with wild Beasts ; if one is choaked in the Waters, the other perishes in the Flames ;

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in short, if the Separation of the Soul from the Body happens in a different Manner, 'tis not without the exprefs Leave and Orders of our heavenly Father. Therefore when we see the strangest Accidents come to pass, and the most *unexpected* and *tragick Deaths* before our Eyes, we must remember the Saying of the Prophet *Jeremy*, when he saw the Burning and Plunder of *Jerusalem*, *Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commanded it not? Out of the Mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good*, Lam. iii. We must then consider with the Prophet *Isaiab*, That 'tis God that creates the Light and Darknes, and that sends Prosperity and Adversity, *Isa. xv. 45.* or with *Amos*, who enquires whether *there be any evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it*, Amos iii. That is to say, that there is no Affliction nor Death that happens, but God has appointed it, and fore-ordain'd it by his wise Providence. If the Devil can't destroy *Job's* Flock of Sheep, nor hurry headlong into the Sea the Herds of Swine without his leave, who holds him fast in Chains, *Mat. viii.* let us persuade ourselves, that all the Powers of Hell and the World can't cause us to die by a violent Death, if God hath not ordained it before in the Resolutions of his infinite Wisdom. So that if at any time a *Prince* or a *Magistrate* speaks to us in *Pilate's* Language to our Saviour, *Knowest thou not that I have Power to crucify thee, and Power to save thee?* Joh. xvi. being strengthened with an holy Confidence, let us answer him as our Saviour, *Thou shouldst not have that Power over me, if it were not given thee from above.* Without the Leave and the Pleasure of my God, thou canst not take from me an Hair of my Head.

We read in the Book of *Judges*, that when *Abimelech* assaulted the Tower of *Thebez*, with a Resolution to win it on a sudden, a Woman cast from the Top a Piece of a Millstone, that fell upon his Head, and brake his Scull, *Judg. ix.* If we look only upon second Causes, this Accident may appear to be strange and unexpected; but we must lift up our Eyes to the *Al-*



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*mighty Hand* of an all-seeing Power and Wisdom, far more dextrous than that of this poor Woman. For the same Relation declares, that God by this Means brought to pass *Jotham's* Prophecy, and rendred the *Wickedness* of Abimelech, which he did unto his Father, in slaying his *Seventy Brethren* with his unmerciful Hand, upon his own guilty Head.

*Ahab* King of *Israel* was disguised, with a Design to fight with the *Syrians*, 1 Kings xxii. An unknown Soldier lets fly by chance an Arrow out of his Bow, which struck him in the weakest part of his Armour, wounded him to Death, and the Dogs lick'd the Blood that issued out of his Wounds. At this Sight a carnal and earthly Mind may say, that this was but an Accident of War; but the Spirit of God informs us better, that this happen'd to fulfil the Prophecy of *Elijah*, and the dreadful Threatnings which he had pronounc'd against this wicked Prince, who labour'd by tyrannical and devilish Means, to invade other Mens Possessions; *Thus saith the Lord, in the Place where Dogs licked up the Blood of Naboth, shall Dogs lick thy Blood, even thine*, 1 Kings xxi.

When we cast our Eyes upon the tragical Death of *Josias* King of *Juda*; at the first Sight it appears but the Effect of the boiling Heat of Youth, which carried him against Reason obstinately to fight with *Pharaoh Neco* King of *Egypt*; or of the Strength and Swiftnes of his Enemies, according to the Complaint of *Jeremiah* the Prophet; *Our Persecutors are swifter than the Eagles of the Heaven, they pursue us upon the Mountains, they laid wait for us in the Wildernes; the Breath of our Nostrils, the Anointed of the Lord was taken in their Pits, of whom we said, under his Shadow will we live among the Heathen*, Lam. iv. But to understand the Truth, we must enter farther into the Sanctuary, and adore the Wisdom of God's Decree, that had resolv'd to take away this good and religious Prince into eternal Rest, and bestow upon him a more noble and richer Crown, before he took in Hand the Sword of Vengeance to punish

the People of *Israel*, for the many Idolatries and horrid Crimes of which they had been guilty; by this Means God fulfill'd the Prophecy of *Hulda*, *Behold I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy Grave in Peace, and thine Eyes shall not see all the Evil which I will bring upon this Place, 2 Kings xxii.*

When we look upon the Death and Passion of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, we may imagine at the first View, that only the Pharisees Envy, *Judas's* Treason, the Mutiny of the rude Rabble, *Pilate's* Injustice, *Herod's* Jest, and the Cruelty of the *Roman* Soldiers, were the Causes of this Tragedy. But the holy Apostles *Peter* and *John*, unto whom our Saviour had discover'd the rarest Secrets of his Wisdom, consider the outward Agents but as the Instruments to bring God's great Design, Man's Redemption, to pass; therefore 'tis spoken of in this manner in the fourth of the *Acts*, *Against thine holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the People of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thine Hand and thy Counsel determined to be done.*

If it happens that a Friend unadvisedly strikes another; if in a Wood where he is felling Timber, the Head of the Axe should slip out of the Handle, and kill the dearest Friend of the Agent; there can be nothing imagin'd to be more casual in regard of the second Causes, *Exod. xxi.* But God declares in express Terms, that he caus'd such an one to be under the Hand of his Friend who kill'd him against his Will. To secure the innocent Author of the unexpected Murder, God appointed Cities of Refuge for such to fly to, *Num. xxxv.*

As when the Hour of our Death is come, all the Riches of the World cannot pay our Ransom, all the Wisdom of the most prudent Councils, or Strength of a Kingdom, are not able to free us from the Power of Death. On the contrary, when it pleaseth God to shelter and preserve our Life, all the Subtilty and Cunning of the Devil, all the Power and Fury of the World cannot take it from us.

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*Eſau* in his Rage, full of Vengeance and Diſpleaſure againſt his Brother, reſolves to kill him. On purpoſe to accompliſh this cruel Deſign, he goes to meet him with four hundred Men. But God, who holds in his Hand the Hearts of all the Men in the World; God, who turns the ſtony Rocks into Fountains of Water, and the Flints into Rivers of Oyl, forced out of this hardned Heart Tears of Compaſſion and Love. The ſame *Eſau*, inſtead of drawing out his Sword againſt his Brother, embraced him with Expreſſions of Kindneſs, kiſſed and wept over him.

*Jacob's* Sons had wickedly intended to deſtroy their Brother *Joſeph*, they were ready to imbrue their cruel Hands in the Blood of this innocent Lamb; but by a ſecret and moſt wonderful Providence, God ſtopt their helliſh Deſign. This great and ſovereign Monarch of the whole World, who draws Light out of Darkneſs, made uſe of their moſt damnable Malice and Hatred, to accompliſh his good Purpoſe, and to raiſe his Servant to a conſiderable Degree of Honour and Glory which was prepared for him. Theſe inhuman Souls, full of Envy and Diſpleaſure, conſpired together how to hinder the fulfilling of *Joſeph's* Dream. But, contrary to their Intention, they made way, and were inſtrumental to the Accompliſhment of that which God had revealed to his Prophet: Therefore when his Brethren were afraid leſt he ſhould revenge himſelf upon them, when he had Power in his Hand, he answered them with an Heart full of Charity and Love, *Am I in the Place of God? As for you, ye thought evil againſt me, but God meant it unto good,* Gen. 1.

*David*, a Man after God's own Heart, fell into many fearful Dangers, ſo that he was reduced oftentimes to the very Gates of Death; but God preſerved his Soul from the Grave, his Eyes from Tears, and his Feet from falling, Pſal cxvi. In the Wilderneſs of *Maſſon*, King *Saul* had ſurrounded him with his Men on every Side, ſo that no Help nor Succour was to be expected



pected from Man, 2 Sam. xxiii. but by a wonderful Providence God deliver'd him: For when he was ready to be caught, a Messenger comes to inform *Saul*, *Make haste and come, for the Philistines are entred into thy Land.* So that neither the inhuman Persecutions of this Tyrant, nor the abominable Plotting of his unnatural Sons, nor the Tumults and Revolts of the People, nor the most furious Tempests of Hell and the World, have ever been able to extinguish his Life before the Time appointed. When he had spent all the Days allotted to him by God's good Providence, he fell asleep, as a Man who lays himself down to rest quietly, after a long and laborious Task.

Queen *Jezebel* was enraged against the Prophet *Elijah*; she had sworn by her Gods, that he should surely be put to Death: But by a Miracle God kept him out of the bloody Hands of this incarnate Devil, and by another Miracle he preserv'd from Famine and Hunger, him whom he had before preserv'd from *Jezebel's* Sword and Fury; he sent the Ravens to feed him with Bread and Meat, Morning and Evening; and for his sake God encreased the Widow of *Zarepta's* Oil and Meal. When he was ready to be famish'd in the Wilderness, God dispatch'd an Angel to him to carry him Meat and Drink. In short, all the Storms that the Devil rais'd against him, could not destroy his Life; so that when God had resolved to crown his Labours, he fetch'd him away in a Chariot of Fire, and carried him up into Heaven.

The *Syrians* were resolv'd to take the Prophet *Elisha*, because he discovered their most secret Counsels, and frustrated all their Designs: Therefore they besieged the Town of *Dothan*, to seize upon this Man of God. When his Servant beheld the dreadful Number of Horses and Chariots which surrounded that weak City, he cried out in a fright, *Alas, Master, what shall we do?* And he answered, *Fear not; for they that be with us, are more than they that be with them,* 2 Kin. vi. At these Words

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of *Elisha*, the Eyes of the poor Man were opened, and he saw an innumerable Company of Chariots of Fire, and Horses of Fire, which God had sent from Heaven to guard his Servant the Prophet.

The *Jews* often plotted against our Saviour Christ, and attempted to kill him, *John* x. They came so near to the Execution of their bloody Design, as to take up Stones to cast at him, and knock him down; as to bring him to the Sides of an high Mountain, to throw him headlong; but he always escaped out of their Hands, and passed through the midst of them without any Harm. 'Twas impossible for them to lay hold of him, when they had undertaken and resolv'd it. The Reason which the Spirit of God gives, is, because that *his Hour was not yet come*, *Joh.* vii. 18.

The High Priest and the Sadducees were inflamed with a hellish Fury against the holy Apostles; they laid Hands on them, and cast them into the publick Prisons, *Acts* v. But because the Time of their Martyrdom appointed by God was not yet come, he sent his holy Angels to free them from their Chains, and set them at Liberty. When *Herod* saw that the *Jews* thirsted for the Blood of God's Servants, the Apostles, *Acts* xii. and that they delighted in their Execution, he cut off the Head of *James*, afterwards he took *Peter*, clapt him in Prison, and delivered him to four Quaternions of Soldiers, with Intention to bring him to Execution after the Feast of *Easter*. But the Hour was not yet come, in which this holy Apostle was to be crucified, for the Glory of him who was crucified for his Salvation. Therefore the Night immediately before his design'd Execution, *Peter* was sleeping between two Soldiers, bound with two Chains, and the Keepers before the Door. On a sudden a great Light shin'd in the Prison, and the Angel of the Lord came and smote him on the Side, and raised him up, saying, *Arise up quickly*; and his Chains fell from his Hands, and the Angel said unto him, *Gird thyself, and bind on thy Sandals*, and so he did; then he saith unto him,

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*Cast thy Garments about thee, and follow me ; and he went out and follow'd him, and he knew not that it was true, which was done by the Angel, but thought he had seen a Vision. But when they were past the first and second Ward, they came to the Iron Gate, which open'd of its own accord ; and when they were pass'd through one Street, the Angel departed from him : Then Peter being come to himself said, Now I know of a Surety, that the Lord hath sent his Angel, and hath delivered me out of the Hands of Herod, and from all the Expectation of the People of the Jews.*

In short, when the Hour is not yet come which God has mark'd out and appointed to take unto himself his faithful Servants, there is no Miracle so great, but he will shew it for their Sake ; he dries up the Seas, he stops the Lions Mouths, he denies to the Fire its usual Heat, he keeps them alive in the midst of the Floods and Flames, in the Whale's Belly, in the fiery Furnaces, and in the deepest Gulphs.

If we did but examine the Memorials of our Forefathers, and consider the Things that we have seen with our Eyes, and experienced from our Infancy, we should find, that the Means which God hath employ'd, and which he does daily employ for our Deliverance, are no less wonderful than those of former Ages. God's Arm is not shortned, his Almighty Power is not lessen'd, he hath yet as much Authority as ever, over Men and Devils, and divine Providence is no less watchful for the Preservation of such as fear and worship him. If we had the Eye of the Soul as open as the Eyes of our Body ; or if we could but perceive the things that are of themselves invisible, we should see that God looks upon us continually with the Eye of his Love, and of his fatherly Care, and that he covers us with his Hand, as with a Buckler of Proof, against all the Darts of the World and of Hell. We should see, that we are encompassed about with a Wall of Fire, and that the holy Angels



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guard us on every Side. We should then acknowledge, that 'tis God that holdeth our Soul in Life, and suffereth not our Feet to be moved, Psal. lx. And we should cry out as *David*, *O God, who is like unto thee? Thou who hast shewed me great and sore Troubles, shalt quicken me again, and bring me up again from the Depths of the Earth; Thou shalt increase my Greatness, and comfort me on every side*, Psal. lxxi.

Although this wholesome and most useful Doctrine be plainly taught in holy Writ, and sufficiently confirmed by so many Examples out of the Word of God; some there are that oppose it with many needless Objections.

In the first Place they say, That God promiseth length of Days to such Children as are obedient to their Fathers and Mothers; from whence they think to infer, that our Life hath no certain time limited, that it is prolonged or shortned, as we prove obedient or disobedient to God and his holy Laws. There is no Difficulty to give an Answer to this Objection.

That in the Language of the holy Spirit, the Word that signifies there *to prolong*, signifies not always to make a thing longer than it was, or should be, but only to make it of a long continuance. So that God promises not here, that the Children who shall obey his sacred Laws, shall enjoy a longer Life than otherwise it ought to be, but only that he will do them the favour to let them live long and happy in this World. We may prove this Exposition by *St. Paul's* Words, who paraphrases this first Commandment of the second Table in this manner, *Children, obey your Fathers and Mothers in the Lord, for it is just; Honour thy Father and thy Mother, which is the first Commandment, with promise, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long upon the Earth.* This Promise is to be understood with some Exception; if God should judge it expedient for his Glory, and for the Good of his Children. For there are many pious and obedient  
Children,

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Children, whom God withdraws out of the World in the Flower of their Age, to give them an happy Life, which shall have no other Limits than Eternity.

In the next Place, they alledg'd the remarkable History of King *Hezekiah*, unto whom *Isaiah* was sent with this Message, *Set thine House in Order, for thou shalt die and not live.* Nevertheless God was entreated by his Prayers and Tears, and prevail'd upon to suffer him to live longer. Therefore the Prophet told him, that God had added fifteen Years to his Days. To this Objection I answer,

That according to the ordinary Course of the World, and the Disposition of the natural Causes, *Hezekiah* was to die of that Disease. For the Scripture saith expressly, that *Hezekiah* was sick unto Death; that is to say, that his Disease was mortal in regard of the second Causes, and the ordinary Course of Nature. Therefore these Words, *Set thine House in Order, for thou shalt die and not live*, ought to be understood with this Exception; Thou shalt die, if I don't deliver thee by a Miracle, and if I don't employ mine Almighty Power to heal thee, and restore thee to thy former Health.

This may be also understood in another Manner, Thou shalt die if thou dost not repent and turn unto me with Prayers and Tears. In the same Sense God caused it to be proclaim'd in the Streets of *Nineveh*, *Within forty Days Nineveh shall be destroyed.*

Let not any Man conclude from hence, that *Hezekiah's* Repentance was the Cause of the lengthening of his Days; and therefore that it was a Casualty very uncertain. On the Contrary, we may understand, that God who has appointed by his eternal Decree, that this wise and religious Prince should live beyond the Disposition of his Body, had also resolv'd to draw from his Heart Sighs and Groans, and Tears from his Eyes; for God knew all his Works from Eternity, *Acts i.*

Others

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Others argue against this Doctrine more impertinently, That if God had numbred our Days, and prescrib'd our Life its Bounds, it is in vain to take so much Pains, and make so much ado about our Bodies distemper'd with Sicknes; and that it is to little Purpose to administer any Remedy to them, or to pray for the Recovery of their Health. In like manner, such may affirm, that 'tis to no purpose to eat or drink, and to hinder mad Persons from casting themselves down a Precipice, or from swallowing Poyson, because they shall live neither more nor less than God has ordain'd from all Eternity. This Objection may seem very plausible at the first, altho' it be most absurd, and so foolish, that it must needs proceed from great Ignorance or Malice. For 'tis not to be doubted, that when any one aims at an End, he designs and supposes by Consequence to attain unto it, by the ordinary Means. For Example, God hath appointed in his eternal Council to preserve *Jacob* and his Family from that Famine which raged the Space of Seven Years: In order to that End he sends *Joseph* into *Egypt*, to gather up Provision the seven Years of Plenty. *Isaiab* the Prophet had told *Hezekiab* from God, that he should live the Space of fifteen Years more; therefore he commanded him to apply to this Prince's Sores and Boils a Lump of dried Figs. God had promised to *David* that he should be King over the House of *Israel*; to confirm this Promise, he had been anointed with Oil, by the Prophet *Samuel*. This Promise don't hinder him from seeking the Means to preserve himself from *Saul's* unjust Persecution. And when *Nathan* tells him, that God had promised to establish his Posterity upon his Throne after him, this don't stop his Prayers, or cool his Devotion; on the contrary, it was that which quicken'd him the more, and inflamed his Soul with Love and Thankfulness to God; therefore he expresseth himself in this manner, O Lord of Hosts, God of *Israel*, thou hast revealed to thy Servant, saying, I will build thee an House, therefore



fore bath thy Servant found in his Heart to pray this Prayer unto thee, &c. 2 Sam. vii.

Our Lord Jesus Christ knew for certain all that should happen to him; nevertheless we find him spending the Days and Nights in Prayer; and when his Life was in danger, he neglected not the lawful and harmless Means. He told his Apostles, *Are not two Sparrows sold for a Farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the Ground without your Father; but the very Hairs of your Head are numbred.* This Consideration hinders him not from commanding them, that when they are persecuted in one City, they should fly to another.

God had appointed to save St. Paul's Life, and the Lives of all the Company; therefore he reveal'd it to him by an Angel; nevertheless, when he saw the Mariners seek to escape, he told the Centurion, *If these don't stay in the Ship, you cannot be sav'd,* Acts xxvii. In short, the Means and Causes are subordinate to the End, in such a Manner, that 'tis mere Folly and Extravagancy to offer to divide them, or suppose them to be contrary.

'Tis without Reason that some bring the History of King Asa against this undoubted Truth. They affirm, that this Prince was reprov'd for seeking to the Physicians in his Sickness. These are the Words of the holy Scripture; *Asa in the thirty ninth Year of his Reign was diseased in his Feet, until his Disease was exceeding great; yet in his Disease he sought not to the Lord, but to the Physicians,* 2 Chron. i. The Spirit of God blames not this Prince because he desired the Assistance of Physicians, but because he neglected to seek Help of God, or to implore his Aid in the Day of his Distress. He that is sick may as freely take Physick, as he that is well may eat and drink, yet we must not altogether repose our Confidence and Trust upon the Remedies, but rather upon God, who sends both Sickness and Health. As Man doth not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from the Mouth of God; so 'tis not by the Physick alone that a Patient is cured of his Distemper, but by the Blessing and Power of him who

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who gives the Wound, and binds it up; who strikes and heals when he pleaseth, *Job* v. Therefore as we ought never to eat or drink before we pray to God to vouchsafe his Blessing upon our Meat and Drink, that he may grant to them the Virtue of recruiting the decay'd Strength of our Bodies: Likewise we should never take any Physick, without lifting up our Hands to God for a Blessing, that the Remedy may have the Strength to expel our Disease. All God's Creatures are good, when they are received with Thanksgiving, for they are sanctify'd by the Word of God, and by Prayer, *1 Tim.* iv.

Take notice here how much such Persons are to be blamed, who when they lament for the Loss of their Friends or Kindred, instead of looking up to Heaven, look down upon Earth, and consider nothing but the exterior Cause of their Grief; instead of adoring, with all Humility, the wise Providence of God that disposes of all worldly Events, and appoints the meanest Circumstances: They fret and murmur, they delight to nourish in their Minds Displeasure, which consumes them; and break forth into many needless Complaints, which serve but to open their Wounds, and to render them more miserable. If he had not been in such a Place, if he had not been engaged in such a Way, if such a Physician had not been call'd, or if another had been sent; if this, or that had not been done, if this Physick had not been administred to him, if less or more Blood had been taken from him, if he had been suffered to eat more Meat, or if less had been given, my Brother or my Sister, my Wife, my Child, or my Husband had been yet alive. It may be, thou art mistaken, Friend, the Disease could not be cur'd but by a Miracle; but when it should be otherwise, we must nevertheless lift up our Eyes to God, and acknowledge his Finger with all respect: For oft-times he blinds the Physicians, so that they can't understand the Nature of the Disease, and suffers them to apply Remedies contrary to the Distemper. As God threatens

threatens to take away the Staff of Bread, that is to say, the nourishing Strength and Virtue of the Bread, *Lev. xxvi.* Likewise he takes away his Blessing from the most sovereign Remedies, and renders them altogether useless. 'Tis thus with all the other Accidents that happen to us, and that bring us to our Graves. For when it pleaseth him to remove any Body out of the World, he suffers him to shut his Eyes to all the Light of Reason and Prudence, and to cast himself headlong into the most apparent Danger. As when he designed to destroy *Absalom*, and to cut him off, he caused him to be led away by evil Counsel, and disappointed the discreet and prudent Advice of *Ahitophel*. Therefore since God hath appointed or fore-ordain'd before Man's Creation, the Time and Manner of his Death; at what Hour, in what Place, and by what Means soever God calls away our Friends, or strikes at our Person, 'tis always our Duty to possess our Souls with Patience, and not to suffer the least repining or despairing Word to proceed out of our Mouths.

If Death suddenly snatch away thy dearest Children, or thy most intimate Friends, complain not of its Inhumanity. Remember that it puts in Execution the Decrees of God's *everlasting Will*, and that it carries with it a Commission sealed with the Signet of the *living God*. Adore therefore with all Humility the *Supreme Monarch* of Heaven and Earth, and say to him as *David*, with a profound Submission, *Lord, I held my Tongue, and said nothing, because it was thy doing*, *Psal. xxxix.*

I don't wish thee to have a Heart of Flint, without natural Affection. Piety and Religion are not barbarous, they deprive us not of our Bowels; the Affection that thou bearest thy Children is not displeasing to the Father of Mercies, if it be but well governed, and don't exceed the natural Bounds. 'Tis lawful for thee to be sensible of thy Grievs, to weep for their Distempers, and to pray for the Recovery of their Health. But when God hath disposed of them, and received them into his eternal Rest, thou must stop  
all



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all thy Sight, wipe all thy Tears, and say, as *David* did after the Death of his beloved Child, *We shall go to them, but they shall not come to us*, 2 Sam xiii.

Do they die of a violent Death? Stop not thy Consideration at the evil Blasts that have carried them away, but lift up thy Mind to the great God that draws these Winds out of his Treasuries; and being armed with a holy Constancy, say, with the patient *Job*, *The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the Name of the Lord*. I am but a weak Instrument which God hath employ'd to put them into the World; but he is their King, their Father, their Creator; he is also their Saviour and Redeemer. Now 'tis both just and reasonable that God should dispose of his Subjects, of his Children, of his Workmanship, and of those whom he hath redeem'd with his precious Blood.

The Master of a Family gathers at his Pleasure the Flowers and Fruits of his Garden; sometimes he cuts off the Buds, sometimes he suffers them to blossom, sometimes he gathers the green Fruit, sometimes he stays till it be ripe; and shall not Almighty God have the Liberty to dispose at his Will, of all that grows in his own Territories? The Master of the Family hath not created the Trees and Plants that are at his Command; but God hath made and fashion'd with his Almighty Hand, all his Children, and all the Men in the World. Our Flowers wither and spoil in a Moment, and our Fruits are soon rotten, and become unprofitable, notwithstanding all our Care and Skill to preserve them; but the Flowers that God cuts or pulls off, he transplants in his heavenly Garden, and gives them a perfect and divine Lustre and Glory, that never fades; and the greenest Fruits that he gathers, he preserves for all Eternity in unspeakable Sweetness.

Doth this Death draw near to threaten thy Person, when it hath dispatch'd thy dearest Friends? Be not frightened at its Appearance; for 'tis not able to anticipate a Moment, the Hour appointed by the Wisdom  
of

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of Almighty God. And when that Moment shall be come, that he shall call thee to himself from Heaven, offer no Resistance, and stop not thy Ears at thy Creator's Voice; say, with the Prophet *Samuel*, *Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth*, 1 Sam. iii. Exod. xxxiii. O merciful God, since thy Glorious Presence goes before me, I am ready to depart out of this crazy Tabernacle, and to quit this miserable Wilderness, to enter into the heavenly and happy *Canaan*; say, with our Saviour, *Father, the Hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee*, John xvii.

Hast thou liv'd many Years upon the Earth? Ascribe not the Cause to the Constitution of thy Body, to the Manner of thy Living, nor to the Skill of thy Physicians; but remember that God lengthens thy Days, and come and cast at his Feet thy reverend grey Hairs, which the holy Scripture stiles, *A Crown of Silver, or a Crown of Glory*, Prov. xvi.

Art thou threatned with Death in the Flower of thine Age? Fret not thyself at it, and let not the least Word proceed out of thy Mouth, but what is season'd with the Salt of true Piety. Remember that 'tis God alone cuts off the Thread of thy Life, and puts a Period to thy mortal Race. Thou hast as much Reason to be griev'd because thou art born so late, as to be sorry that thou diest so soon. Instead of spending thyself in useless Complaints, which is, as if thou who art but an earthly Vessel newly formed, shouldst cast thyself against the Rock of Eternity: Remember to adore and praise thy *Great Creator*, and return him hearty Thanks, in that he is so well pleased to crown thee in the middle of thy Race, and so bountiful as to bestow the Salary of the whole Day upon thee, who hast labour'd but a few Hours. He is very favourable to thee to transplant thee before thou hast felt the Heat of the Day, and the scorching of the Sun. Remember that 'tis the pleasant Gale of his divine Mercy, that drives thee so fast into the secure Haven of eternal Happiness. Think not therefore that God's  
calling

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calling thee away in thy Strength, is a Testimony of his Displeasure and Hatred; for to hasten and render a Person most happy, is no Sign of Ill-will. It may be that God calls thee, because he hath found some good thing in thee, as in *Abijah* the Son of *Jeroboam* King of *Israel*; because he loves thee dearly, and favours thee, he intends only to remove thee from the approaching Evils, as he did *Jefias*, one of the holiest and most religious Princes that ever reigned; because thou dost walk before him, and seekest to please him, he will take thee up into his holy and heavenly Paradise, as he did *Enoch*, for fear that the Temptations of the World should alter thy religious Disposition; and for fear that the Enemy of thy Salvation should prevail upon thee, by his continual and wicked Suggestions, to leave the Way of Righteousness, in which thou dost walk at present. As there are some rich Stuffs, whereof the Ashes are most precious, and others whereof the Cinders are good for nothing but to be cast away: Thus there are some happy Grey Heads, where the rich and precious Relicks of Righteousness and Piety shine, whereas others are only fit to discover the Follies and Vanities of our human Nature. As there is some sort of Wine that grows better by old-Age, and preserves its Strength until it comes to the Dregs; whereas other Wine there is, that soon becomes sour and useless: Likewise there are some Men, whom old-Age makes better and wiser; so that they are like to the *Indian* Trees that yield precious Perfumes and Frankincense, only when they begin to decline and wither. The old-Age of such is most honourable, and sends forth a blessed Perfume of Piety; whereas others corrupt with Age, and give out a most filthy Stench; under a white Head they hide a black Soul and a wicked Conscience. In the Decay of their Age, the Vices of their Mind gather Strength and flourish. Instead of Weeping for the Sins of their Youth, they add Sin to Sin, and are more hardned in Evil. Old-Age imprints more Furrows and



and Wrinkles in their malicious Hearts, than it doth upon their Foreheads. Neither Men nor their Lives are to be measured by a Yard or an Ell. We must not only consider how long we have liv'd, but how well we have liv'd, and employed the Course of this Life. For there are some young Men, who have the Wisdom and Prudence of gray Heads; and there are gray Heads that become as weak as Infants; and some that scarce go out of that simple Age. The first are twice Children, the others continue always in their Childhood; some young Men have performed such brave and glorious Deeds, that one would judge by the Passages of their Lives, that they have lived several Years or Ages. On the contrary, some old and decrepit Persons can scarce prove that they have been long in the World, unless it be by the Church Register, by their gray Hairs, or by the great Number of their wicked and abominable Actions. This Consideration causeth the Author of the Book of *Wisdom* to say, *That old Age is not the most Reverend, that can shew a Number of Years, but Wisdom is to be reckoned old Age amongst Men, and a Life without Spot*, Chap. iv. 'Tis certain he hath liv'd sufficiently, who hath learn'd to live well, and hath prepar'd himself to die well. To what Purpose should this miserable and languishing Life be lengthned a few Days? Art thou afraid to be happy too soon? and fearest thou to see the End of thy Torments? Doth the Traveller endeavour to lengthen out a painful and dangerous Way? Doth the Workman grieve to have finish'd betimes his laborious Task? Doth the Soldier murmur because he comes off from his Watch and Guard? Miserable Man! What are all the Years for which thou dost so impatiently afflict thyself, and vainly desire? For a Day with God is as a thousand Years, and a thousand Years in his Sight, but as one Day.

He that sails upon the Sea, admires the spacious Extent of the Waters, and the Difference of its rowling Waves, that mount up sometimes to the Clouds, and then fall down again into a Bottom. And such as tra-

vel by Land, are delighted to see on one Side deep Valleys, and on the other high Mountains, that reach above the Clouds; but if God had but taken us up into the Seat of his Glory, and that we should from that high Heaven cast down an Eye upon this contemptible Globe of the Sea and Land, to behold the proud and stately Mountains, with the most swelling Waves; they would appear unto us but an even Plain, or rather they would seem altogether very little. Thus when we compare the Men of the World, the one with the other, we shall find that some have lived long, and others but a little while; that some are old, others young; but in respect of God, there is no Difference between the Young and the Old, between an over-aged *Methusalem*, who lived Nine hundred three-score and nine Years, *Gen. iv.* and a Child that hath only seen the Light of the Living; for the Life of all Mankind is but a Moment in Comparifon of Eternity.

If thou art ready to die for Righteousness, of a violent Death, meditate seriously upon the Saying of the Prophet *David*, *Pfal. cxvi. Precious in the Sight of the Lord is the Death of all his Saints.* Arm thyself with an holy Confidence, and say with *Eli*, *1 Sam. iii. 'Tis the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* Imitate the Generosity of *St. Paul*, *Acts xx.* and grave in thine Heart these divine Expressions, *The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every City, saying, That Bonds and Afflictions abide me, but none of these Things move me, neither count I myself dear unto myself, so that I might finish my Course with Joy, and the Ministry which I received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God.* Remember always the Prayer that our Lord and Saviour offered up unto God in the greatest Agony; *O my Father, if this Cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy Will be done.* Forget not also at this time Christ's Advertisement, *He that loveth his Life, shall lose it: and he that hateth his Life in this World, shall save it to eternal Life, Joh. xii.* O Great and Glorious Lord God,

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God, the Enemies of thy Truth are met together against thy dear Children whom Thou hast sanctified by the Blood of the Covenant ; but they are not able to do any thing but what Thou hast appointed to be done in thine eternal Wisdom.

### A Prayer and Meditation upon the Time of Death.

**O** Merciful Lord, who dost govern all things by thine infinite Wisdom, and hast reserved the Times and the Seasons in thine own Power ; thou hast not only written my Name in the Book of the Living, but hast also measured the Length of my Life, and appointed the Hour of my Death. Thou hast numbred my Days, and prescribed to me my Bounds that I cannot pass beyond them. This miserable Body is but a weak Tabernacle made up of Earth, subject to all manner of Infirmities ; nevertheless none is able to destroy it without thy divine Assistance. The same Hand that hath fashion'd and form'd it, must break it in pieces. If a Sparrow cannot fall to the Ground without thy Permission, 'tis not possible that my Soul should fly away into Heaven without thy Warrant. My God and Father, give me daily Apprehensions of Death, but let me rest upon Thee, who dost kill and give Life, who dost cast into the Grave, and fetch from thence again. Let Satan and all the Enemies of thy Glory lay their Snares for me, they are not able to do any thing, but what thy Wisdom hath ordained and appointed before the Foundation of the World ; without thy Leave and Permission, they are not able to pluck an Hair from my Head, nor diminish a Moment from the Time I am to live in this earthly Tabernacle. O Almighty and most Merciful God, I recommend to thee my Soul, as to my faithful Creator, and yield it wholly into thine Hands. Here I am to accomplish thy Will, and to submit myself to thy Pleasure, without any Resistance ; whether this Soul which



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thou hast created after thy Likeness, and which is an Image of thy Divinity, remain in this Body, that I may be able to serve thee on Earth, or whether thou dost call for it, and take it up into Heaven, that it may glorify thee in the Company of thy Saints, and of the blessed and glorious Angels. Amen.



### A Prayer and Meditation upon the Manner of our Death.

**O** God the Creator of all Flesh, and the Father of the immortal Spirits, I know that every kind of Death of thy Children is precious in thy Sight; and that howsoever that shall happen, thou wilt take care of my Soul. When I consider all things, I find that it matters not whether my Spirit issues out of my Lips, or out of a Wound, so that it enter into thy Glory to enjoy thine eternal Happiness. What Matter is it if my Lamp goes out of its own Accord, or if it be blown out by some envious Blast, so that it be lighted again by the immortal Beams of the Son of Righteousness, and continue for ever glorious in the highest Heavens? I shall be sufficiently happy, if I die in the Lord, and enter into thine eternal Rest, from all my Labours, in what manner soever Death assaults me. From all Eternity, O Lord, thou knowest all thy Works, and with a Glance of thine Eye, thou discoverest the Depths, and seest into an endless Eternity. As thou hast marked out and appointed the Moment of my Death, thou hast also ordained the Manner of it. I must, O Almighty God, repose my self upon this wonderful and wise Providence, and be contented with thy uncontroulable Decrees. But, O my God and heavenly Father, if thou wilt give me the Liberty, who am but Dust and Ashes, to speak to thee, and to send up the Thoughts of my Heart; I beseech thee to be so gracious, as to let me know my End, that I may not be surpriz'd on a sudden by an unexpected Death, as Job's Children; and

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and so merciful as to give me timely Notice of my Departure, as thou didst to thy Servant Hezekiah. I desire not the Notice of many Years, but of a few Days, or at least of a few Hours immediately before, that my Soul may not be disturb'd with evil Thoughts, or frighted with false Conceits, and malicious Suggestions of the Devil; but that I may end my Days with all Tranquillity and Satisfaction of Mind, that I may always have a perfect Use of my Senses, of my Reason and Understanding, and the Assistance of thy Grace, that I may glorify thy Name, and edify my Neighbours, until the last Moment of my Departure. Suffer not therefore my Soul to be snatched away by Force on a sudden, but grant me time to commit it into thy merciful Hands. Amen.



### A Prayer and Meditation for one that dies in a strange Country, in the midst of Infidels.

**O** My God and heavenly Father, how grievous is this Trial? Who can express the Troubles of my Mind? At the Moment of my most urgent Necessity, and of the Oppression of my Soul, at the Time of my Agony, I see myself destitute of all human Assistance. Here I am at a Distance not only from my Country, and pleasant Company of my Friends, and deprived of all Spiritual Comfort, of which I have at present greatest Need in this Extremity; but also, to my unspeakable Grief, here I am in a strange Place, in the Power of my cruel Enemies. I have no Body to strengthen me in the Faith of my Saviour Christ. All things that appear before me, increase and add to my Trouble; I am here among the Adversaries of thy Truth, who labour to destroy my Interest in Christ, and cause me to perish, now that I am entering into the Haven of Eternity. I must encounter with Death, with Hell itself, and with the subtil Insinuations of the Infernal Spirits. O Almighty and Merciful

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ciful Lord, suffer me not to lose my Courage, and to yield to the present Temptation. By thy wonderful Providence, and out of thine abundant Mercy, supply all my Wants and Infirmities, and grant that I may, with the Shield of Faith, quench all the fiery Darts of Satan. I am beset with many visible and invisible Enemies; but they that are for me, are more in number than they that are against me. 'Tis true, I am far from Heaven, whereof the Earth is the Centre. I am at a Distance from all my earthly Friends, but nothing can put me at a Distance from thee, O good God, who lovest me with an unchangeable Affection. I am in the Embraces of mine heavenly Father, and of my God, I have not the Assistance of a Minister to help me in my Grief and Pain; but I know that thou wilt send me thine holy Angels, as once to thy beloved Son in his bitter Agony. These Angels shall protect me against all the Powers of the Prince of Darkness; thou wilt administer unto me thyself, the sweet Comforts of thy Salvation; thy Rod and thy Staff will assist me in this Valley and Shadow of Death. O Lord, thou doest things that are not to be searched out, and so many Wonders, that 'tis not possible to number them; thy Grace is sufficient for me, and thy Power is made manifest in mine Infirmities. Thy Holy Spirit, who is the true Comforter, and the great Power of the Almighty, shall refresh me in these my Afflictions, and in all things shall make me more than a Conqueror. Thou art stronger than all other Beings, so that I am persuaded, nothing can ravish me out of thine Hands. I am certain that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, can separate us from the Love that thou hast declared to me in Jesus Christ my Lord; this precious Faith, with which thou hast strengthened my Soul, shall vanquish the World, triumph over Hell, and destroy Death in its own Empire. Amen.



A Prayer and Meditation upon the Death of  
a beloved Person.

O my God, I acknowledge that there is nothing certain nor unchangeable on Earth but thy precious and holy Promises; therefore it becomes us to enjoy the things of the World, as if we enjoy'd them not. Thou hast snatched out of my Embraces, and pulled from my Bosom my greatest Darling, and most intimate Friend. Thou hast open'd my Heart, and torn my Bowels, and thou hast separated me from myself, so that my Life is but a Burden and Pain to me. I did often look upon this pleasant Object of my Love as a Gift from above, and a Mark of thy Favour and Liberality; it was my greatest Joy, and my sweetest Comfort. The Day that took it away, overwhelmed me in a Sea of Grief. That which doth most disturb me, is, that I am afraid that this is a Stroke and an Effect of thy Anger and Justice. Lord my God, I must needs acknowledge that I have grievously offended thee, seeing thou dost thus chastise me with so much Severity, and makest me feel so sharp an Affliction. I am unworthy of all thy Favours, seeing thou dost take from me such a precious Jewel, which was shew'd to me as Lightning. I am afraid to have been wanting in my Duty, and that this Death that kills me, is the Effect of my Stupidity and Blindness. Methinks I could have hinder'd this doleful Accident; for if I had behav'd myself otherwise than I have done, my Life and Soul should not be in its Grave. O God of all Comfort, pardon my excessive Grief, pacify my Sighs, stop the Current of my Tears, remove all these vain Displeasures that consume me, deliver my Soul from this unmerciful Grief and Torment that it suffers, and from these Troubles that are more than human, instead of looking to those inferior Causes, and to the Circumstances of the Death of this beloved Person; give me Grace to remember, that the least things as well as the greatest, are govern'd and rul'd by thy wise Providence, and that the Good and the Evil proceed from thy divine Appointment.

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Give me Grace to consider, that thou dost hold in thine Almighty Hand, the Keys of Life and Death, and thou alone dost cast us into the Grave, and lift us up from thence again. O Sovereign Monarch of the Universal World, who dost not only let Death loose, but also appointest all the Circumstances; make me truly submissive unto thy sacred Pleasure, and to put my Finger upon my Lips, because 'tis thy doing. If I open them, let it be to adore thy Justice, and sing forth thy Praises. The Person for whom I lament so much, was nearly related to me, like another myself, and was also thy Creature, thy Child, and a Member of our Saviour's Mystical Body. We, for our parts, believe to have the Right of disposing of our Workmanship, and of that which we have bought with our Money; and hast not thou, O God, the Liberty to dispose of that which thou hast created after thy Likeness? Bought, not with corruptible things, as with Gold and Silver, but with the precious Blood of the Lamb without Spot or Blemish? Thou hast a Son who is the Brightness of thy Glory, and the express Image of thy Person, whom thou hast not spar'd for me; and shall I, Lord, refuse thee my Heart and my Bowels? Thy only begotten Son came down upon Earth to suffer the most cruel and ignominious Death of the Cross; but thou hast taken up into Heaven the Person whom my Soul loved, to crown him with a glorious and ever happy Immortality. Shall his (or her) Felicity be the Cause of my Afflictions? And shall his (or her) Rest occasion my Displeasure? 'Tis the Property of true Love to prefer the Happiness of the beloved Person to our Satisfaction; therefore our Saviour told his Apostles, if you did love me, you would rejoyce, because I go to my Father; for my Father is Greater than I. Between thee, O great and living God, and us miserable Worms of the Earth, there is as vast a Difference, as there is between the innocent and harmless Delights of this World, and the unspeakable Pleasures of thy Presence. For these are but as Drops of Water that are dried up with the least Wind; whereas the Satisfactions of Heaven are like a bottomless Sea of Delights, in which we shall swim for ever. Do I there-

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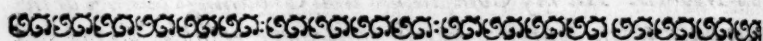
fore weep for him or for her, whose Tears thou hast wip'd away? Do I wear a mourning Apparel, and black Scarf, for him who is now cover'd with a glorious Attire of Joy and Gladness, who is adorn'd with an Habit as white as Snow? Do I delight myself in Darknes, and doth he solace himself at the Fountain of Light and Glory? Do I seek a solitary and melancholy Retreat, and doth he rejoyce amongst the Thousands of Angels, and the glorious Company of immortal Spirits? I sigh and groan, and he sings a new Song, the Song of the Blessed, which is always in his Mouth. All my Complaints and Groanings cannot bring him back upon Earth; but if that were possible, 'tis not just to attempt it; my Kindness would be cruel, and my Love must be inhuman. How could I resolve to make him leave the Haven of eternal Felicity, to expose him again to the furious Waves and Storms of this troublesome Sea of the World? To engage him in fresh Encounters, to cloath him with the Rags of Mortality, to take him out of Rivers of Pleasures, and bring him back again into a Sea of Gall and Bitterness, and feed him again with Bread of Affliction? Can I be so cruel as to wish him out of thy Embraces, and the ravishing Enjoyment of thy Favour and eternal Life, to deliver him again into the Torments of Mortality? The Shortness of this Life minds me of my Departure after him, to the Light of the Living, where we may again enjoy one another. O Lord, truly wonderful, and various in all thy Dispensations! 'Tis not only for the Advantage of this happy Creature, and thy Glory, that thou hast taken him into thy Rest; but for my Good, and the Instruction of his surviving Friends; to put my Obedience and Faith to a Trial, as thou didst the Father of the Faithful, whose Trial was far greater than mine. For thou commandest him to sacrifice his Son with his own Hands; but thou requirest from me no other Sacrifice, but my Submission to thy holy Will. I will therefore speak in Heli's Language, 'Tis the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good: or as Job, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord. Thou hast taken from me what I highly valued on Earth, that I might

look



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look up to Heaven, whither he is departed from me. Grant me therefore Grace to put an end to all these Sighs, Groans and Tears, and spend no longer my Time and my Breath lamenting the Loss of my beloved Object; but that I may employ myself to prepare for my Removal out of this earthly Tabernacle. Grant that I may imitate the Piety, Zeal, Faith and Constancy, and all other Virtues of such as thou hast admitted into thine eternal Rest, and crown'd with everlasting Joy and Happiness. Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last End be like his. Amen.



### CH A P. X.

*The fourth Remedy against the Fears of Death, is, to disengage our Hearts from the World.*

THE Children of *Israel* decamp'd from the Wilderness with a ready Mind, and went joyfully over the River *Jordan*, when God commanded them so to do. The Cause of their Readiness was an earnest longing for the Land of *Canaan*, and their unsettled Condition in the Wilderness, having nothing but Tents to live in. Death is to us the same, in regard to our heavenly Paradise, as the River *Jordan* was to the Children of *Israel*, in respect of the promised Land. Therefore from hence it appears, that the strongest Motives to oblige us to a Resolution of entering into this Passage willingly, is, to free ourselves from all things which might incumber, stop, or tye us to the World, and keep ourselves always in a Readiness to depart.

For that Purpose, 'tis not necessary that we should go out of the World, but that the World should be banished and driven out of us, and that we should renounce all Vanities and unruly Affections, so that we might be able to say with the Apostle, *The World is crucified to me, and I am crucified to the World*. For there be many who depart out of this World, but leave their Hearts and most tender Affections behind.

As

against the Fears of DEATH. 99

As *Lot's* Wife that went out of *Sodom*, but left there her Treasures and Delights, her most ardent Desires. As the *Israelites*, who, when they went out of *Egypt*, left behind them their cursed Affections, with their Pots of Flesh and Onions.

The same thing happens to many, who separate themselves without any Necessity, from the Acquaintance of Mankind, and who affect a strange and austere kind of Life. They leave the Society of wise and virtuous Persons, and the lawful Use of the Blessings which Heaven had granted them; and they deprive themselves of all that deserve Esteem, and the Means of glorifying God, and edifying their Neighbours. But many times they carry with them their Corruptions, their Vices, and a Legion of wicked Thoughts and carnal Desires. By this Means they give way to the Devil, and expose themselves to all his Temptations. For that wicked Serpent delights rather in the Dens of wild Beasts, and in the Caves of the Earth, than in the Palaces and Dwellings of Princes and Kings. The most abominable Vices creep and breed rather in the Desarts, and Places of Retreat, than in Publick, and in great Cities that are full of Inhabitants. *Lot* remain'd chaste in the most abominable City that was in the World; but when he went aside to the Foot of a Mountain, and into the Cave to dwell, he defiled himself with a monstrous Incest. When Satan intended to tempt our Saviour Christ, he carried him into a Desert, and to the Top of a Mountain. From hence we may learn, that this subtile Enemy of Mankind had learnt by his long Experience, that the Places of Retreat, and the most solitary, are the fittest to lay his Snares. If our Saviour, who was wholly innocent, and free from Sin, hath been able to overcome all manner of Temptations; we are not of the same Temper, we are not furnish'd with such Armour as he was, of Proof against all the inflam'd Darts of the Devil. For our miserable Flesh delights in its own Destruction, it opens the Ears and the Heart wide, to the

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the deceitful Promises of Satan, and suffers itself to be cheated by his damnable Enchantments. It flatters us, and causes us to be lull'd asleep in its Bosom, then like a treacherous *Dalilah*, it betrays us into the unmerciful Hands of our great Enemy.

Some cloath themselves with Hair, and wear at their Girdles a knotted Cord, whom the Devil drags to Hell with the invincible Chains of Lust. Others climb up to the top of frozen Mountains, and yet their Hearts burn with impure Flames. Some affect a mournful Solitariness, whose Desires and Longings are for the World and its Vanities. Others have their Hands lifted up to Heaven, whose Mind is enslaved to the Earth, and rooted in the rotten and filthy Pleasures of the Age. Some have a Lamp burning before them, whose Understanding is wrapt in gross Darkness, more palpable than that of *Egypt*. Others have an empty Stomach, whose Soul is full of abominable Passions. In short, some live in Appearance like Angels, and yet they are possess'd by Legions of infernal Spirits. Others seem to have no Concernment in the World, and yet lodge the whole World in their Hearts.

Under a coarse Habit dwells oft-times more Envy, more Vanity and Ambition, than under the glorious Attire of Silk and Gold. Thro' a torn Habit some Souls may be perceiv'd swell'd with Pride and Arrogance: And in Company of Beggars, are to be found many times the Designs of Kings, and the lofty Thoughts of the Greatest Monarchs. To speak plainly, the good Things and Advantages of this Life do not stop and wed us of themselves to this World; but rather that Love and Affection which we bear to 'em.

For without doubt, there be many that are more earnest and affectionate for the things they want, than others that enjoy them. Some poor People have a far greater longing for Riches, than ever *Solomon* had in the midst of all his great Treasures. Some silly Women who are cover'd with old Rags, and some contemptible



temptible *Joans* have more Vanity and Pride in their Brains, than ever had Queen *Esther* in her richest and most glorious Attire. The Prophet *Daniel* was rais'd to an high and eminent Honour, for he was the Governor of the Third Part of the Monarchy of the *Persians*, and of the *Medes*; nevertheless, he was no more concern'd in *Babylon*, than if he had had there but a Sepulchre, and worn the Chains of a Slave; he sends forth as many Sighs, and pours as many Tears, as if he had been sitting upon the Ashes of *Jerusalem*.

Some pitiful Beggars are more loth to quit their Rags, than Sovereign Princes to lay down the Ensigns of their Dignity and Honour. Such are more enslav'd to their Filth and Baseness, than the greatest Monarchs to the Glory and Splendor of their Empire. Death labours as much to free a Man from his Prison, and to take him out of his Dungeon, as to drive him out of his Palace, and to tumble him from his Throne; the Poor and the Indigent, who have no other Bed to lie upon than the hard Ground, make as much Resistance as the Rich, who are stretch'd upon the softest Couches: The Gally-slaves are as unwilling that Death should loose them from their Chains, and take them out of their Misery, as the Kings and Princes are to leave their Sceptres and their Crowns. I am fully persuaded that *David* was more willing to go from his Command, and from his Riches, than many poor Wretches are to depart from their Dunghills, and their Meanness. Some Persons are tormented with the Gout, the Stone, and other grievous and sensible Pains; they desire nevertheless, more passionately to live, than many who enjoy a perfect and flourishing Health. Carnal and earthly Souls are so much wedded to the Earth, that they feel a great Reluctancy, and an unspeakable Displeasure, when they are to depart from a Body rotten and falling to pieces with old-Age. Whereas others who are more spiritualiz'd, and that have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and of the Powers of the World to come, depart most willingly out of young  
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and lusty Bodies, flourishing in their Strength and Beauty.

We must not therefore remove out of the World our Legs and Arms, but our Affections and vain Lusts. If God bestows upon us his earthly Blessings, we are not to follow the Example of that extravagant Philosopher, who cast into the Sea his Silver and his precious Stones, that he might not have the Trouble to keep them; and who lost 'em willingly, that he might not be in any farther Danger of losing 'em afterwards. But we must take heed, that they cause not our Faith to make Shipwreck, and that we regard 'em not more than our Consciences. For the Soul is a far more precious Jewel than the Body, and Life is far more considerable than Cloathing. Seeing that God bestows upon us so many good Things, with an Intent that we should enjoy them; we should shew ourselves unthankful to his Goodness, contrary to the wise Providence, and unjust and cruel to ourselves, to refuse the Means of ever using and employing these Blessings. All God's Creatures are good, and none are to be rejected, but received with Thanksgiving; for they are sanctified by the Word of God, and by Prayer.

The Honour and Riches derived to us from our Birth, or that we obtain by lawful and just Means, are to be ranked among the Blessings of God. Therefore *Esther*, who was but a poor Stranger, received with Joy, as a Favour from Heaven, the Imperial Crown that was put upon her Head, and refused not to be the Wife of the greatest Monarch of that Time. *Joseph* accepted willingly the Power and Dignity with which King *Pharaoh* had invested him; and the Prophet *Daniel* did not only take the honourable Commands which were bestowed upon him by the King of *Babylon*, but he employed his Power and Credit to raise also his Companions to Places of Trust, and to the Government of that Empire. God sometimes gives Sceptres into the Hands of cruel and profane Persons, such as were *Pharaoh*, *Ahab*, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belshazzar*,

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*Ishazzar*, and *Herod*, to teach us, that 'tis not the chief Good of Man, and that we must aim at a more excellent Kingdom, and at more solid and constant Felicities. He also places upon the Throne Men according to his own Heart, whom he cherishes as the Apple of his Eye, as *David*, *Solomon*, *Jehoshaphat*, *Hezekiah* and *Josias*, to teach us that the Fear of God, and the Expectation of an immortal Crown, is not inconsistent with the Honours of this Life, nor with worldly Glory; *For true Piety hath the Promises of this Life, and of that which is to come,*

The Riches of the Earth are no more hurtful than the Honours and Dignities, unless it be by Accident; they are very useful and advantageous to such as employ them well, and dispose of them with religious Discretion. They are powerful Helps to true Piety, and excellent Means to glorify God, and to exercise our Mercy and Compassion: I may say that they give a Lustre to the Zeal and Charity of God's Children. Riches turn to Evils, and are ill bestow'd in the Hand of a brute and sordid *Nabal*; at the Disposition of a merciless and voluptuous Glutton, as in the Gospel, of a perfidious and treacherous *Judas*, of a silly and debauched Youth, as the prodigal Son; but they are the Blessings of Heaven, when they fall into the Hand of a *Joseph*, who nourisheth therewith his Father, and all his Kindred; in the Hands of a *David*, that employed them in Offerings to Almighty God in the Sight of his People; of a *Solomon*, who built a magnificent Temple; and of a *Mary Magdalen*, who spent them not in Luxury and Vanity, nor in curious Trinkets, but to buy a Box full of precious Ointment, which she poured on the Head of the Saviour of the World. These are Blessings indeed, when such an one enjoys them as *Cornelius* the Centurion, who employ'd them in Alms, whereof the Perfume ascended up to the Throne of the God of Mercies. In short, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the eternal Wisdom of his Father, hath uttered out of his sacred Mouth,



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Mouth, that *It was more blessed to give than to receive*, Acts xx.

I am not ignorant of the Oracle pronounc'd by this great God and Saviour, *That whosoever doth not renounce Father, Mother, Houses and Lands for my Sake, is not worthy of me*, Mat. x. This was said to teach us, that we must renounce with Heart and Affection all things in the World, and of this present Life, and that we must be always ready to forsake all, in case we cannot keep them without offending God, and giving a Scandal to his Church. But without such absolute Necessity, God requires not from us in any Place of Scripture, actually to quit and leave our worldly Possessions.

I know also very well, that when a young Man enquired of our Saviour, *What he was to do to inherit eternal Life?* This wise Teacher return'd him this Answer, *Sell all that thou hast, and give it to the Poor, and thou shalt have Riches in Heaven; then come and follow me*, Luke xviii. This was a particular Commandment made only to that Man, upon a singular Occasion; from whence it is not possible that we should gather any Conclusion to oblige others to the same Action: For otherwise this might oblige all Christians in general to sell what they have, without Exception, and to give it to the Poor. The Commandment was given upon this Occasion; this vain-glorious Pharisee boasted of having kept all the Commandments of God from his Youth up. To remove this good Opinion of himself out of his Mind, and to give a Vent to the Swelling of his pharisaical Pride, our Lord puts him to a Trial, enjoins him to sell all his Goods, and to give them to the Poor. At these Words the young Man went away very sad, in a Confusion, because he had much Riches, and his strongest Affections were fix'd there. By this he discovered that he was far from loving God with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, and with all his Strength, because it appear'd that he loved his worldly Possessions more than Christ and his Blessedness. You may therefore understand with-

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out Difficulty, devout Souls, that this Commandment made to this young Man, extends not to all in general. If it had been so understood, the holy Apostles, who were mindful of every thing which tended to Perfection, would not have rested satisfied with the Loss of their Goods, to follow Christ, as they declar'd to him themselves, *We have left all, and have followed thee*, Mat. xix. But they would have reserv'd nothing for themselves, which Course they never took. For St. John, Christ's belov'd Disciple, had a Dwelling House, where he entertained the holy Virgin after our Saviour's Death, *Job. xix.* And the other Apostles had their Ships, their Nets and Tackling: Therefore after Christ's Resurrection they return'd to their Fishing Trade.

Our Saviour, upon the Occasion of the young Man's refusing to obey this exprefs and particular Command of *selling his Goods, and giving them to the Poor*, informs his Disciples, *that it is hard for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* But he explains in another Place this Passage in such a Manner, that he leaves not the least Difficulty in it; when he saith, that 'tis hard for them, who put their Confidence in Riches, to enter into the Kingdom of God, *Matth. xix.* By this we may understand, that he speaks not of all rich Men in general, but of such only who put their Trust in their Riches. Therefore the Apostle St. Paul don't command the rich Men to cast away their Estates and Goods; but he advises them not to put their Confidence in them, so as to become more vain and haughty. In this Manner he speaks to *Timothy*, *Charge them that are rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living God, who giveth us richly all Things to enjoy*, 1 Tim. vi.

Here are therefore the best Directions, according to my Judgment, for a true Christian who desires his Soul to be acceptable to God, to attain to the Dispositions necessary for an happy Death.

1. We must employ our most constant and earnest Endeavours and Affections, for the spiritual Advan-

tages of the Soul, and of the Life to come. We must thirst impatiently for the Graces of God, and for the Gifts of his holy Spirit. We must sigh and long for the spiritual Robes of the Soul, and labour with all our Strength, to attain to the incorruptible Crown, and the immortal Glory of Heaven. Christ gives us this holy and safe Advice, *Seek, faith he, first the Kingdom of God and its Righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you*, Mat. vi. And elsewhere, *Labour not for the Meat which perisheth, but for that Meat which endureth unto everlasting Life*, John vi.

2. As the good King Solomon built first the Lord's House, and then laid the Foundation of his own Palace: Thus we ought to proceed to labour first for the Advancement of God's Kingdom, and the Edification of his Church, that then we may have Liberty to employ ourselves about the Affairs of this present Life, and about our worldly Concerns. But our Employment and Calling must be just, and warranted by the Laws of God and Man; for he that gains Riches by unlawful Arts, is but a Thief and a Robber.

3. Before we engage in any Work, we must pray to God to vouchsafe his Blessing to it, and speak to him as Moses, *Let the Beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish thou the Work of our Hands upon us, yea the Work of our Hand, establish thou it*, Psal. xc. For without his Assistance and Blessing all our Labours will be in vain and to little Purpose. 'Tis God that makes Poor and makes Rich, that lifts up and abaseth, 1 Jam. ii. *Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the Increase*, 1 Cor. iii. The Royal Prophet is of the same Judgment, when he saith, *If the Lord buildeth not the City, their Labour is but lost that build it*.

4. Our Labour must be without Murmurings, and mistrusting God's Providence; we must banish out of our Minds all idle Thoughts and groundless Expectations that disturb us, Psal. cvii. We must pluck out of our Hearts all the Cares and Displeasures that trouble

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us. We must imprint in our Minds that excellent Sentence of David, *Cast thy Burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee*, Psal. v. and that of St. Peter, *Cast all your Care upon him, for he careth for you*, 1 Pet. v. We must remember our Saviour's Charge, *Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and the Cares of this Life*, Luke xxi.

5. Above all things we must beware of the slavish Vice of Covetousness, that denies God's good Providence, and his fatherly Care. To that purpose St. Paul exhorts us in exprefs Words, *Let your Conversation be without Covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee*, Heb. xiii. That he might beget in us an Aversion of this infamous Vice, St. Paul tells us, *They that will be rich fall into Temptation and a Snare, and into many foolish and hurtful Lusts, which drown Men in Destruction and Perdition*, 1 Tim. vi. He adds next, *For the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil, which while some coveted after, they had erred from the Faith, and pierced themselves through with many Sorrows*, Col. iii. The same Apostle declares, that Covetousness is Idolatry, and that it shall never inherit the Kingdom of God, Eph. v. Therefore we ought to follow the wise King's Advice, *Labour not to be rich, but forbear from any such Design*, Prov. xxv.

6. If God pleaseth to afflict us with Poverty, and to cast us down in the Dust of a mean Estate, notwithstanding our continual Labours in a lawful Calling; let us endeavour to possess our Souls with Patience. Look upon Christ our Saviour, who for our Sakes became poor, altho' he was rich, that we might be enriched by his Poverty. Let us beseech him to grant us the blessed Disposition of St. Paul, that we may be able to speak as he did, *I have learn'd to be content in whatsoever Estate I am. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where, and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and suffer need. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me*, Phil. iv. Remember, Christian Souls,

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to settle your Treasure in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Rust can corrupt, and where Thieves cannot break through and steal ; labour to be rich in Faith, and in good Works, that you may inherit the Kingdom that God hath promised to them that love him.

7. But if it hath pleased God to bless thy Labours, and his powerful and liberal Hand hath rais'd thee up to great Honour, so that thou enjoyest Riches in abundance, thou must remember to possess 'em in such a Manner that they may not enslave thee ; and, according to St. *Paul's* Advice, thou must remember to enjoy them, as if thou enjoyest them not, and that the Fashion of this World passeth away. We must not trust upon them, nor pride in them. We ought to glory in something else, as God himself exhorts us, Let not the wise Man boast of his Wisdom, nor the Strong of his Strength ; let not the rich Man glory in his Riches ; but let him that glories, glory in that he hath Understanding and knows me, *Jer. ix.*

8. We must not only take off our Hearts and Affections from the World and its Vanities, trample upon them and esteem them like Dung, in comparison of the unspeakable Treasures of Heaven ; but we must also be ready to leave them at every Moment, as for many Trifles, vain and perishable things. As we are to possess them without Displeasure and Fear, so we must part with them without Grief and Murmuring. 'Tho' we should lose in a Day all that God hath bestow'd upon us in the World, it becomes us to strengthen ourselves with an holy Confidence and Resolution, saying with *Job*, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the Name of the Lord*, *Job i.*

9. If we happen to part with our Goods, Honours, and Dignities in the Service of God, and for the Profession of Christ's Gospel ; in such a Case we ought to endure the Loss with a Christian Patience, and an excessive Joy, because that such a Loss for a just Cause will prove at last to our Advantage and Glory. This was the Practice of the faithful *Hebrews*, of whom St. *Paul*

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renders this Testimony, *You have taken joyfully the spoiling of your Goods, knowing that you have in Heaven a better and more lasting Inheritance*, Heb. x. Christian Souls represent unto yourselves the Example of the Prophet *Moses*, who *esteemed the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt, for he had a Respect unto the Recompence of Reward*, Heb. xi.

10. Whilst we enjoy our Goods, we must take care of the Poor, and be bountiful in Alms; and to speak in *St. Paul's Language*, *Whilst we have Time, let us do good, especially to the Household of Faith*, Gal. vi. Whoever hath Compassion on the Poor, makes God his Debtor; he will assuredly return him his good Deed, *Prov. ix.* Our Saviour promises to recompense a Cup of cold Water, that shall be given to the meanest of such as believe in his Name, *Matth. x.* Alms is a Seed that is cast upon the Earth; but its Flowers and most excellent Fruits are to be gather'd in Heaven. He that sows liberally, shall reap liberally, *2 Cor. ix.* 'Tis not therefore as that other Seed mention'd, *Pf. cxvi.* that they that sow in Tears, shall reap with Songs of Triumph. For whosoever bestows his Alms sparingly and unwillingly, he shall be treated in the same Manner as he that refuses to part with it. Therefore *St. Paul* declares, *Tho' I should give all my Goods to nourish the Poor, if I have no Charity I am nothing*, *2 Cor. xiii.* God loves a chearful Giver, and delights in such Sacrifices, *2 Cor. ix.* Remember therefore, Christian, that God shall judge you at the last Day, not by Learning, Knowledge, Riches or Dignities, and Honours of this Life, but by your Alms-Deeds, and Acts of Charity and Hospitality, and by distributing of your Goods to the Necessities of the Saints. Make to your selves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting Habitations, *Mat. xxv. Rom. xii. Luke xvi.* that upon your Tomb one may justly engrave, *He hath scattered, he hath given to the Poor, his Righteousness*, that is, his Charity and Alms-Deeds, *remain for ever*, *Psal. cxi.*



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11. Finally, We must not only take off our Hearts and Affections from the Riches, Honours, and Vanities of this World, but we must also deny ourselves, tame and overcome our Passions, and crucify our Flesh with its Lusts. Therefore our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ calls upon us from Heaven, *He that will follow me, let him deny himself, take up his Cross daily, and come after me,* Mat. x.

That we may be able to imprint this good Lesson in our Minds, we must seriously consider in the first Place that we are but Strangers and Pilgrims in this World, and that we have no lasting City, *Heb. xiii.* The Houses that God grants to us, are no perpetual Dwellings, but only Inns for our present Conveniency. This was the frequent Consideration of the great Patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, who saw the Promises afar off, and believed and embraced them. For *St. Paul* informs us, they did ingenuously profess, that they were no better than Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, and their Intention was to march forwards to their celestial Country. This was *Jacob's* Language when he appeared before *Pharaoh*: *The Days of my Pilgrimage have been short and evil, they have not attained to the Years of the Life of my Fathers, and of the time of their Pilgrimage,* *Heb. xii. Gen. xlvii.* And not only the ancient Patriarchs, who never had any other Possessions in the World than a Tomb or some small Piece of Ground, have acknowledged themselves to be Strangers and Pilgrims; but Princes and Kings also, whom God hath sanctify'd by his holy Spirit, have freely confessed the same. For *David* declares not in the time of his Banishment, nor of his Flight, nor in his Calamities and Misery; but in his most flourishing State, and in the midst of his Triumphs, Glory and Plenty and Prosperity, he declares unto God, *I am a Stranger and a Sojourner with thee, as all my Fathers were,* *Psal. xxxix, and cxix.* And when he speaks not only of himself, but also of the rest of God's Children that are upon Earth, he makes no Difficulty to confess, *We are Strangers and Sojourners with thee, as*

*all*

## against the Fears of DEATH. III

all our Fathers were, and our Days are as a Shadow upon Earth, and there is none abiding, 1 Chron. xxix. Rich and Poor, Masters and Servants, Princes and Subjects, all of us in general, we may, with Reason, say to the Men of this World, as *Abraham* to the Children of *Heth*, *I am a Stranger and a Sojourner in the midst of you.* Now he that travels in a strange Country, may gather some Flowers in his Passage, or take with him a few Ears of Corn; but if he be wise, he will never tarry to build a Palace. If he be well treated in his Inn, he must not despise the good Cheer; but if his Entertainment be bad, he must endure with Patience the Inconveniences, and contemn all the Disorders that happen during his Abode. If the Way be deep, full of Mud, Briars, and Thorns, he must go out of them as soon as he can; and if it be good and pleasant, he must not stop in it, to busy himself with needless Inquiries. Every one that is a Traveller, dreams of nothing but how to advance in his Journey, and go forward. Likewise, being accustomed to Plenty and Want, to Riches and Poverty, to Honour and Dishonour, we ought to leave the things that are behind, and to proceed forward to such as are before, that we may attain to the End and Reward of our heavenly Calling, *Phil. iii.*

2. Consider not only, I beseech you, that we are Strangers and Sojourners in the World, and that we are not to inhabit always in this foreign Country, but that our Passage will be but for a few Days, *Rev. vii.* We need but little to flourish and entertain us in this short Race; at the End of it we shall neither hunger nor thirst, and the Sun shall burn us no more. As it happen'd with *Jacob* and his Family, when they went into *Egypt*, they had no other Corn nor Food, but what was needful and necessary for them in the Way; because they were certain to meet with Plenty of all manner of good things in *Joseph's* House. Likewise we need not make any great Provision for our selves in this Life, because we are marching apace towards our Saviour Christ, our eldest Brother, unto whom

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God hath given all Power in Heaven and on Earth, *Mat. xxiv.* We are marching into a Country that abounds with all manner of true Riches, Excellency, Glory and Happiness.

3. Consider that we are not only Strangers but Soldiers, and under the Banner of Christ our Captain, who judges him that fights justly, *Rev. xix.* Job acknowledges, *that there is a Warfare appointed to all Mortals upon Earth, Job vii.* But I may say, that this Warfare is chiefly for such as aim at the glorious Immortality, and that God calls them to endure grievous and violent Encounters. Therefore St. Paul exhorts his beloved Disciple *Timothy, to behave himself as a good Soldier in this just War, and to fight the good Fight of Faith,* 1 Tim. i. Now he that goes to War, must not incurber himself with the Enjoyments of this Life.

4. Moreover, consider that we are like to Soldiers who are engaged in an Enemy's Country, not with a Design to conquer and establish ourselves there, but only to obtain a free Passage, having only an Intent to pass through into our own native Soil. We don't desire to get into our Hands the Inheritances and Possessions of the Worldlings, nor to rob them of their Crowns and Sceptres. We have no other Request to make to them, but that which the Children of *Israel* made to the Inhabitants of *Edom*, when they were going to the promised Land, *Numb. xxix.* We desire leave to pass peaceably, and go along by the King's Highway, to take Possession of the Inheritance which God hath prepared for us, from the beginning of the World. We would not so much as taste of a Bit of Bread without paying for it, nor drink a Cup of Water without leave.

5. Consider that this Life is a Race, and the World the Place to run in. Now such as are in a Race must take heed that Thorns do not catch hold of them in their Course, nor that their Feet sink into the Mire or the Clay; and that they may run swifter, they must cast off all Burdens and Incumbrances. If therefore

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we will run this Race in such a Manner, as that we may obtain the Prize, we must look that the Thorns and Briars of the World take not hold of us, and that we sink not into the Mire of the dirty Pleasures of this Life. We must cast away all the Burdens that overcharge us, and especially the Burden of Sin, which is so grievous, that Nature itself groans under it. 'Tis the Intent of St. Paul's Exhortation, *Seeing we are compassed about with so great a Cloud of Witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the Sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with Patience the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who, for the Joy that was set before him, endur'd the Cross,* Rom. viii. Heb. xii.

6. Consider that our Life is a continual Wrestling; for we wrestle not only against Flesh and Blood, but also against Principalities and Powers, against the Lords of the World, and the Rulers of the Darkness of this Age, against spiritual Wickedness in high Places, *Eph. vi. 1 Cor. x.* Now he that intends to wrestle well, must diet himself accordingly. If therefore for a corruptible Crown, Men diet their Bodies, render them supple and pliant, and abstain from Delights and Pleasure; how much more Reason have we to do the like for an uncorruptible and glorious Crown?

7. Consider that God will have us to be conformable to the Image of his Son, and that we must follow his Footsteps. Now this good Saviour represents to us his own Condition, *Rom. viii. 1 Pet. ii. The Foxes have Holes; and the Birds of the Air have Nests, but the Son of Man hath not any where to lay his Head,* Luk. ix. Therefore he made this Confession before Pontius Pilate, *My Kingdom is not of this World,* Joh. viii. And for that Reason he reproves the gross and carnal Expectations of the two Disciples, as they were going to *Emaus; O Fools and slow of Heart, to believe all that the Prophets have spoken,* Luk. xxiv. *Ought not Christ to have suffered those things, and to enter into his Glory?* According to his blessed

fed Example we must have but a little Portion and Concernment in the World, and enter by many Afflictions into the Kingdom of God, *Acts xxiv.*

8. I judge, that 'tis also necessary that we should represent at every Moment unto ourselves, that to speak properly, we can have but the Use, and not the right Enjoyment of God's Creatures. We are intrusted with his Favours, as the Stewards of his Blessings and Riches. At every Moment he may call us to an Account, and require from us a Reason of our Behaviour, and take from us our Enjoyments. We should therefore look upon our Houses and Possessions, as upon things that are lent unto us. For as we are not displeased to restore what we have borrow'd, and what we enjoy, as long as it pleases the lawful Owner to lend it; thus, we should gladly leave this present Life, and all our worldly Possessions, in case we can but persuade ourselves that all belong to God, and that he hath lent them but for a Moment.

9. Moreover, 'tis necessary for us to consider the fruitless Labours and Pains that we are at, when we purchase the Riches of the Earth, and ascend up to Dignities and Honours: For as the Husbandman, when he hath manur'd his Field, and water'd it with his Sweat, is many times deceiv'd of all his fair Hopes and Expectations, thus it commonly happens to the Covetous and Ambitious; they toil and labour in vain; the Good which they think to grasp, slides away between their Fingers as Water, or as Wax, that melts at the first Approach of the Fire; and all the Honours which they expect to enjoy and embrace, are as a Shadow that soon vanishes, or as a Smoak that flies up out of their reach; when they have well labour'd for these Vanities, they reap nothing but Grief and Displeasure.

10. Take notice of the small Satisfaction that there is to be found in the most entire and perfect Enjoyment of the Advantages of this World. They are like Drink, which leaves us still athirst, and like empty

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Meat which cannot satiate our Longing; like the Waters of the Well of *Sychar*, whereof our Saviour said to the Woman of *Samaria*, *He that drinketh of this Water shall thirst again*, John iv. It happens to the Worldlings, as to him who sleeps hungry, and dreams that he is eating, when he awakes, his Stomach is empty, *Isa. xxix.* or like to another, who thinks in his Sleep that he drinks, but when his Eyes are open, he finds himself drowthy, and his Appetite unsatisfied: For he who hungers for Money, is never contented with the Enjoyment of it; and he who thirsts for Vain-glory, can never be pleased with all the great Honours and Grandeurs of the World, *Ecc. v.* Instead of satiating his longing Appetite, these Things serve but to increase and augment it. The whole World was not large enough to satisfy the foolish Ambition of *Alexander*: For tis said, he wept when a Philosopher told him, there were yet many Worlds to conquer. This Man, for whom six Foot of Earth was sufficient, had a Mind to command over a Thousand Worlds, if there had been so many.

11. Consider that all the Treasures and Riches of the *Indies*, and the Pomp and Grandeur of the World, are not able to bring Peace to the Soul, nor Quiet to troubled Consciences. When a poor Man has got together a little Silver and Gold, or when a mean Person is raised to the highest Offices and Dignities, his Misery continues still, tho' it changes its Appearance. Oft-times 'tis so much the more insufferable, in that it puts on a false Lustre, and a deceitful Gloss, in that such are constrained to live always masked, to suppress the Pangs, the Grief, the Sighs and Groans that often interrupt their profane Smiles, and carnal Delights and Pastimes.

Therefore our Saviour compares Riches to Thorns, for they prick and gaul not only the Hands, but the Heart and the Bowels of such as embrace 'em with Affection. It may be also said, that they are like Lions and Bears; for they are not to be caught without much Difficulty,



Difficulty, and they are as uneasy to be kept, because we must take heed that we be not bit with their venomous and deadly Teeth. If you had but tried the horrible Displeasures, the sensible Grievs, and secret Fears, with the tormenting Cares that attend upon the most glorious Sceptres and the richest Crowns, you would never judge the Saying of that Prince unreasonable, who exclaim'd against his Royalty in this Manner, *O Crown, if any did but know thy Weight, he would never lift thee up from the Ground.* The most Part of the Pleasures and Satisfactions of this Life depend much upon Man's Imagination, and all this Grandeur and human Glory is nothing but Wind. The Royal Prophet teaches us this Truth with much Elegancy, when he saith, *That every Man at his last State is altogether Vanity; surely every Man walketh in a vain Shew, surely they are disquieted in vain,* Psal. xxxix. Solomon, the most learned of all Kings, the richest and most magnificent Prince of his time, had refused nothing to his Eyes to gratify his Lust; he had tasted of all the Delights and Pastimes that can be imagined; but at last he found so little Satisfaction and solid Content, that he was forced to acknowledge, that all things under the Sun are but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, *Eccles. iv.*

12. Chiefly, we are to consider, that if our Enjoyments have been wrongfully gotten, as *Balaam's* Reward, *Achan's* Wedge of Gold and Scarlet Cloak, *Gehazi's* Changes of Raiment, *Abab's* and *Jezabel's* Vineyard, *Judas's* thirty Pieces, *Num. xxii. Josh. vii.* they bring no real Content or Peace to the Soul, but they rather fill us with Gripings of Conscience, and with a fearful Despair, *2 Kin. v. 1 Kin. xxii.* If the voluptuous Worldling who hath enricht himself by Rapine, Usury, or Extortion, did wring with his Hands his sumptuous Garments, where his Pomp and Pride appear'd, he would visibly squeeze out the Tears of the afflicted and poor People, *Mat. xxvii.* If he did but relish the right Taste of the Liquors that he drinks out of his Cups of Jasper and Crystal, he should find, instead of

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Wine and Limonade, the Sweat and Blood of the Miserable; and if he had but seriously look'd into the Silver and Golden Vessels that are put upon his Table, he should perceive the Marrow and the Bones of such as he hath devour'd. Whosoever becomes fat with the Substance of the Widow, and the Fatherless, shall never open his Coffers, but he may spy there the Image of the Devil and the hellish Furies; he may hear the Cries and Groans of such, whom he hath destroyed by his Injustice and Cruelty. If such escape unpunish'd here upon Earth, they shall surely feel the Severity of God's Vengeance hereafter. If there be no Sword to strike them, nor Fire to consume them, nor Leprosy to gnaw them, nor Dogs to tear them, nor Halter to hang them, they have a guilty Conscience that will perform more than this. For 'twill be their Witnesses to accuse them, their Judge to condemn them, their Rack, their Wheel, and Executioner to torture them. The time will come when the Worm that never dies, and the Fire that shall never be quenched, shall torment and burn them.

13. Consider, that 'tis possible to be very indigent in the midst of a great Plenty. The Poets have had a Design to represent this by the Fiction of a Man thirsting in a River, whereof the Waters reached up to his Chin. The Covetous Miser represents this miserable Wretch. He may be also compared to the Fig-tree of the Gospel, cursed by our Saviour Christ, that brought forth no Fruit for others, and withered for want of Nourishment. Therefore a contented Poverty is more worthy than Riches with Discontent. Nature is satisfied with a little, Piety with less; but Covetousness hath no Measure. The Heathens have very well acknowledged, that he was the richest who was most content. For the more things you desire, the more are wanting to you. It matters not much, if the Cup which is presented to you, be of Gold or Earth, so that there be Liquor enough to quench your Thirst. I would rather drink of a little clear Stream of Water, than out of a  
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great River all muddy and troubled. A little Quantity of Ground is sufficient to nourish a Man in this Life, but less necessary to cover him when he is dead. A little Money satisfies to subsist honestly in the Fear of God, but less is required to die happily, in the Favour and Love of our good Saviour. Kings, and the greatest Monarchs have but one Body to nourish and to cloath, as well as the meanest of their Subjects. They who enjoy least in this World, use, or rather abuse the most of any, the things that they possess. Instead of envying the Worldling's Opulency, let us meditate upon St. Paul's excellent Saying, *Having Food and Raiment, let us be therewith content*, 1 Tim. vi. And let us imprint in our Minds that other Sentence, *Piety with Contentment is great Gain*, 1 Tim. i.

14. Christian Souls, cast your Eyes upon all the Things of the World that are most esteem'd, and you shall find that their Possession is but uncertain, and of short Continuance; for Riches have Wings to fly to Heaven as an Eagle. *All Flesh is like Grass, and the Glory of Man as the Flower of the Field, the World passeth away with all its Lusts*, Prov. xxiii. There needs but the pillaging of a Town, the breaking of a Merchant, or an unsuccessful or contrary Suit in Law, to render thee poor, and bring thee to Want. A little Sparkle of Fire is able to reduce all thy Riches into Ashes, and to bring thee to extream Poverty. The least Frown can cover thy Face with Shame and Confusion, and cast thee down from the highest human Glory, into the deepest Abyss of Disgrace and Ignominy. The Wise Man informs us, *That he who trusts in his Riches shall fall*. We may say so of such as rely too much upon great Mens Favour: For 'tis like a broken Reed that pierces the Hands of such as lean upon it. There is nothing here below so constant as Inconstancy. If the Earth did not often change its Face and Appearance, it would not be Earth as it is; and if the World were not inconstant, it would cease to be a World. Therefore, 'tis no Wonder if the Heathens, who understood not  
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God's wise Providence, that governs the natural Beings and draws Light out of Darkneſs, have repreſented Fortune blind, mounting ſometimes on a Wheel, and in an Inſtant tumbling down again. How many Perſons do we meet with, reduc'd on a ſudden to Beggary, who a little before flouriſh'd in all manner of Plenty? How many are caſt down into the Duſt, and become the Scorn of the World, who were once rais'd to the higheſt Dignities and the higheſt Honours? How many fall into the Contempt and Deriſion of the Vulgar, whoſe Praises were once exalted up to Heaven? In a Word, how many do we ſee before our Eyes drag'd along the Streets, ſhut up in cloſe Priſons, brought upon the Scaffold and Gallows, who were once the Glory of the World, admir'd of all Men, and the Scourge of honeſt Men? When we run over and conſider the ſtrange, unexpected, and ſudden Changes that we have ſeen in our Days, they ſeem to us as Dreams. St. Paul repreſents this great Inconſtancy of the World to take off our Hearts and Affections from it. *The time, ſaith he, is ſhort, it remaineth, that both they that have Wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not; and they that buy, as though they poſſeſſed not; and they that uſe this World, as not abuſing it, for the Faſhion of this World paſſeth away,* 1 Cor. vii. Becauſe of this great Inconſtancy of all the worldly Advantages, St. Paul invites us to think upon the everlaſting Riches, *Charge them, ſaith he, that are rich, that they put not their truſt in uncertain Riches, but in the living God, laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good Foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal Life,* 1 Tim. vi. For the ſame Reason the Son of God adviſeth us, *not to lay up for ourſelves Treasures upon Earth, where the Moth and Ruſt doth corrupt, but lay up for yourſelves Treasures in Heaven, where the Moth and Ruſt do not corrupt, and where Thieves do not break thro' and ſteal,* Matth. vi. A wiſe Perſian was well acquainted with this Truth; therefore he hath left this Leſſon for Poſterity,

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sterity, *The World is constant to no Man; my Brother, apply thyself and thy Heart to the great Creator of the World, and that shall suffice thee.*

15. Consider, that if Riches and Honours leave us not in our Life-time, or in case none take them away from us by Violence, 'tis most certain that Death will deprive us of all, and will separate them from us for ever, *Psal. xlix.* For when a Man dies he carries nothing with him, his Glory accompanies him not into his Grave, *1 Tim. vi.* We brought nothing into this World, and 'tis certain that we can carry nothing out, *Job i.* The Kings and the greatest Princes may speak in this Language, as well as the meanest Soldiers of Fortune, *Naked I came from my Mother's Womb, and naked I shall return.* All the Treasures, Riches, Sceptres, and Crowns, shall never advantage us after our Decease. What was *Nebuchadnezzar* the better for having had so great a Number of People within his Dominions? They could not hinder him from lying down upon a Couch of Worms, nor preserve him from being eaten with Vermin, *Isa. xiv.* To what Purpose did the rich Glutton abound in all manner of Riches in his Lifetime? After his Decease he could not obtain a Drop of cold Water to assuage his violent Thirst, *Luke xvi.* The Author of the Book of Wisdom was entred into this Meditation, when he represented the Worldlings spending themselves in Lamentations for their former Follies and voluntary Blindness. *What hath Pride profited us, say they, or what Benefit hath Riches brought us? all these things are passed away as a Shadow, as a Post that runs swiftly, or as a Ship that slides thro' the troubled Waves,* *Wisd. xvi.* Our Heirs give us nothing of all our Substance but a Winding-Sheet, a few Boards, or it may be some Pounds of Lead; all consumes with us, and rots in our Grave in time. In short, we must not only quit and abandon all our Honours, Dignities, Treasures, and Riches, but we must also quit this Body, this Flesh and Bones, cover'd with this beautiful Skin. O Man! remember that thou art but Dust, and that thou shalt return to Dust.

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16. *Saladine*, the famous Sultan of *Egypt*, hath left to Posterity an illustrious Testimony of the Vanity of all Riches and worldly Grandeur. For upon his Death-bed he commanded that his Winding-sheet should be carried at the End of a Launce by an Herald, who was to proclaim, *Here is all that this great Prince hath carried away of his Riches, Glory, Principalities and Lordships, which he enjoyed upon Earth.*

17. Consider, that 'tis a great Cause of Grief, that we know not who shall inherit the Fruits of all our Labours, which we keep with so much Care and restless Fears. Who knows but our greatest Enemies, and that which is worse, God's Enemies shall cloath themselves with our Spoils; and that which we have been gathering many Years, shall be spent in a Moment? Of this Vanity and Evil, the Royal Prophet complains *Psal. lix. Sure, every Man walketh in a vain Shew, surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up Riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.*

18. Consider well, Christian People, the dangerous Effects wrought in us by the Love of the World, and the Deceitfulness of *Riches*; it stifles in our Hearts the good Seed of the Gospel, *Matth. iii.* It hinders it from growing up to Salvation; it keeps many from glorifying God, and making an open Profession of the Truth. As 'tis said of some of the chief Pharisees, that they believed in our Lord Jesus Christ, but they would not confess him before Men, because they loved more the Glory of Men, than the Glory of God. Therefore when *Cyrus* made Proclamation, that the Children of *Israel* should have full Liberty in their own Country to rebuild *Jerusalem*, to repair God's Temple, to re-establish his neglected Services, there were many *Jews* that cared not to obey this Prince's Command, nor God's Call; because they were settled in *Babylon*, they were too much wedded to the Pleasures and Delights of that City, and therefore loth to part with their Concerns there for *Jerusalem*. For the same Cause that young *Man*, mentioned before, would not follow the



Saviour of the World, nor obey his Command, because he had much Riches, and had settled his Heart and Affections upon them. As God's Ark and *Dagon* cannot dwell together under one Roof, 1 *Sam. v.* so the Love of God and the Love of the World can never subsist together. Therefore St. *John* adviseth us, *Love not the World, nor the things that are in the World; if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him,* 1 *John ii.*

19. Take notice, that this is the Passion that stops so many in their first beginnings of Piety: For as *Lot's* Wife was chang'd into a Statue of Salt, as soon as she had look'd behind her; so when God sends his Angels to take us by the Hand, and drag us out of the spiritual *Sodom*, there is nothing more dangerous, than to look with Regret and Longings for carnal Delights and worldly Advantages, which we are then totally to quit. That alone is able to stop our Proceeding forward, to stifle our Zeal, and to cause all pious Intentions to vanish into the Air; there we must imprint in our Minds this excellent Sentence of our Saviour, *No Body that puts his Hand to the Plough, and doth look back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.*

20. This is the Cause that so many Persons, esteem'd well grounded in Religion and Piety, are prevail'd upon at last to turn their Backs to God, and to make Shipwreck of their Faith. What was the Reason of the *Israelites* murmuring so often, and desiring to return into *Egypt*? Was it not, as we have already taken notice, because their Hearts and Affections were settled and fix'd on that cursed Land, from whence God had deliver'd them by so many Miracles? And wherefore did *Demas* leave St. *Paul* and Christ's Gospel? 'Twas because *he loved too much this present World.* In short, our own Experience confirms to us the Saying of our Saviour, *No Man can serve two Masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will cleave to the one, and despise the other; you cannot serve God and Mammon.*

21. Consider, that if these worldly Goods and Honours don't produce in us these woful and lamentable Effects, they often produce them in our Posterity. Many would live happier in the World, and be honest Men, if their Parents had not left them so much Riches, and so many Honours to possess. Their Riches and Honours therefore draw upon them many Evils, and oft-times they cast them headlong into several Debaucheries and Insolences. 'Tis that which fills them full of a ridiculous Vanity, and of unsufferable Pride, that renders them hateful to God and Man. In a Word, 'tis that which makes them forget God, and to be unmindful of the Treasures and Advantages of his Kingdom, *Prov. xxx.* Therefore *Agar* presented this excellent Prayer unto God, *Give me neither Poverty nor Riches, feed me with Food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the Name of my God in vain.* Wretched Man! to what Purpose dost thou labour so carefully to gather up Riches for thy Children? It may be that these Riches which thou takest from others, or which thou dost get with the Loss of thy Soul, shall serve to make *Golden Calves*, to be the Substance of infamous Idols, as *Gideon's* Gold plundered upon the *Midianites*, was employ'd in an Ephod which became a Snare to his House, and to all *Israel*. Thus it happens many times, that the Goods which are gotten with the Expence of much Blood and Sweat, and the Honours unto which we climb up with so much Earnestness and Passion, become a Snare to our Posterity; they cast them headlong into an Abyss of Misery.

22. I should not forget that Death is a kind of Sleep; therefore in holy Scripture, to die and to fall asleep, are to be understood in the same Sense. Now as we cannot conveniently fall asleep, unless we set aside and forget all the troublesome Affairs of the World; likewise 'tis altogether impossible to die comfortably and peaceably, if we banish not out of our Hearts betimes, all the foolish Fancies that disturb us, and

all the sharp Cares that undermine and consume us.

23. To this Purpose, prophane History tells us of a remarkable Passage of *Cyneas*, a great Minister of State to *Pyrrhus*, King of *Epirus*; that when he saw his Master so busy in raising an Army, to march against the *Romans*, he began to argue with him in this manner; Sir, if it please God to grant you the Victory over the *Romans*, how could you employ yourself next? The King answered, We will then endeavour to conquer the rest of *Italy*. And when we shall have *Italy* in our Possession, reply'd *Cyneas*, what shall we do afterwards? We will go against *Sicily*, said the King. The discreet *Cyneas* continued to demand, and when we have all *Sicily*, what shall we do? *Pyrrhus* answered him, We will pass to *Africa*, and take *Carthage*, and after that we may recover *Macedonia*, and command all *Greece* without controul. But, Sir, replied *Cyneas*, when we shall have got all into our Possession, what shall we do then? The King answer'd him with a smiling Countenance, My Friend, we will then repose ourselves, and take our fill of Delights and Pleasures. Then *Cyneas* began to tell the King, what hinders us now, Sir, from taking our Rest and Delights? For we have all that in our Hands that we are going to seek so far, with so much Bloodshed and Danger. We may apply this to ourselves, we have most of us intricate and hidden Designs, which can't be accomplish'd in the Age of one Man. We are afraid to die, as if Death had already caught us by the Throat; and yet we have so many Desires to fulfil, as if we were immortal.

We build and adorn our sumptuous Dwellings, as if we were never to leave the World; and we are always gathering so much, as if we had the Charge of providing for a Royal Army. Let us therefore in this Case imitate this wise Minister of State, let us ask ourselves. For what Purpose are these vast Designs? What End do we propose to ourselves of all our Labours and Care? What do we aim at when we run so many Dangers, and endure so many Inconveniencies? Our Souls

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will answer us, without doubt, that 'tis with an Intent at last to rest ourselves in Peace, to live at Ease, and enjoy the Fruits of our Labours. Let us enjoy that Happiness, and that Satisfaction at present, let us not stay to rest ourselves, until Death shall stretch us in our Graves. Let us be satisfied with the Goods that God hath already bestowed upon us, and let us use them with Thanksgiving. Miserable Wretches that we are! Why do we labour and torment ourselves for so many things, seeing that there is but one thing necessary, and that is, Piety, the Fear of the Lord, and the Expectation of his eternal Felicities! Let us therefore make an Election of this good Part, and it shall never be taken from us, *Luke x.*

24. If we desire to imprint in our Minds the Contempt of the World, and its Vanities, we must often meditate with serious Attention upon the Excellency of our Nature, sanctified by Grace, upon the Worthiness of our spiritual Calling, and upon the Riches and Glory of that eternal Happiness, which God has provided for us in Heaven. 'Tis impossible to look upon these things as we ought; but we must conclude with the Apostle, that the World, with all its Pleasures and Treasures, is not worthy of us. The Woman that appeared to St. *John* in a Vision, was cloathed with the Sun, having the Moon under her Feet, and a Crown of Twelve Stars upon her Head. This is a lively Image of Christ's Church in general, and of every faithful Soul in particular: For when we are cloathed and adorned with Jesus Christ the Sun of Righteousness, we ought to trample upon all the Pomp and Magnificence of the World, and laugh at the Revolutions of the Ages, at the Vanities and Inconstancy of the Earth. We must seek our greatest Glory, and our most ravishing Delights in the Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles, who are so many Stars shining in the Firmament of the Church. Let the World alter its Face as often as the deceitful *Laban*; we ought to resemble the Rays of the Sun, always alike. For our Glory is not as that of the World,

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and the Princes of this Age, which is reduc'd to nothing. 'Tis not settled upon a vain and failing Foundation; but upon the living and true God, who is the same Yesterday, to Day, and will be the same for all Eternity, *Heb. xiv.* Some glory in their Chariots, others in their Horses; but we will boast in the Name of the Lord our God, *Heb. xiii. Psal. xxix.*

25. Consider, that God hath given us Faces looking up towards Heaven, that he might thereby teach us to lift up thither also our Hearts, and carry thither our Affections and Desires. He hath created our Souls, and given them a spiritual Being, that they may take their Flight above all earthly Matter. He hath adorn'd them with Immortality, that they might contemn all things that are not immortal as themselves, all decaying and perishing Enjoyments. In short, seeing God hath prepared for us his Heaven, his Paradise, his Glory, his Treasures, and the Rivers of our eternal Delights, how can we confine our Desires, and be content with this Dust of the Earth, where Serpents crawl?

26. When *Alexander* was preparing to leave *Macedonia*, and go to the Conquest of the *Persian* Monarchy, he gave away all his Goods to his faithful Friends and Servants. *Perdiccas*, one of his Favourites, enquiring of him what he had reserved for himself, the King answer'd, that he had reserv'd HOPE. Thus ought we to dispose ourselves to depart out of the World, by leaving our Parents, Friends, and Estates, that we now enjoy. And if our Flesh enquires of us what we have kept for ourselves, let us confidently answer, that we have kept our HOPE. I may assure you, Christian Souls, that this your Answer shall be better grounded than that of *Alexander* to his Favourite. For this Prince left his Patrimony and Kingdom without any constraint; but whether we will or no, we must leave the World. *Alexander* quitted certain Goods for a doubtful Hope, but we abandon perishing Enjoyments, for an Hope

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more secure and settled, than Heaven and Earth. *Alexander's* Expectation was but of a temporal Kingdom, and of a short and vanishing Glory; but our Expectation is of an incorruptible Crown and eternal Triumphs: Death, that seiz'd upon *Alexander* in the Flower of his Age, put a Period to all his Victories, and consumed all his Trophies; but we are in hopes of conquering Death itself, and this Hope will not deceive us, *Rom. v.* This therefore being our Assistance, 'tis no Wonder if *St. Paul* tells us, *That Hope is as a sure and unmoveable Anchor to the Soul, piercing into the Veil, that is, into Heaven itself, where Jesus Christ is entered in as our Fore-runner.*

27. God hath hid in the Earth Gold, Silver, and Jewels, to teach us to trample upon the Riches and Pomp of the World. But he hath raised us up to the highest Heavens, or spiritual Treasure, and our immortal Crowns, that we might lift up thither our Hearts and our most earnest Affections. He desires that we should imitate the Prophet *David*, who always comforted himself in his Banishment and Persecutions, with the Expectation of the Kingdom promised to him, and confirmed by *Samuel's* Unction. God would have us to do as the true *Israelites* in the *Babylonish* Captivity; they had always their Hearts and Affections in *Jerusalem*; in the midst of their great Sorrows, *Jerusalem* was all their Comfort. Likewise we, who are wandring up and down in this miserable Wilderness, who live in the World as in a *Babylon*, in a kind of Captivity, ought to comfort ourselves, and rejoyce in Expectation of the Kingdom of Heaven, which hath been prepared for our Fruition from all Eternity, and whereof the holy Spirit is the true Unction, which hath confirmed the Promise of it, and given us the Earnest, *Psal. cxxxvii. Gal. iv.* The Eye of our Faith should always be fix'd upon our celestial *Jerusalem*, that is, the Mother of us all, and the Place of the eternal Rest, *Colos. iii.* The Apostle therefore exhorts us,



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*If you be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sits at the right Hand of God; think on things that are above, and not on things on the Earth; for you are dead, and your Life is hid with Christ in God.*

28. When Men are going to live in another Country, where their Money will not pass, they furnish themselves with Bills of Exchange, and find the Means of receiving it in other Coin. Therefore, seeing that our Gold, our Silver, and our present Jewels will not pass in Heaven, the Place of our eternal Abode, let us send thither betimes all our Riches and Treasures by Bills of Exchange. And that we may entrust them with an Assurance of a notable Advantage, and of a lawful Gain, let us put them in God's Hands, for he will restore us an hundred times more in his Kingdom. Let us now distribute them to the Poor, to the Members of Christ's mystical Body, and this divine Saviour will then acknowledge, that they have been given to his own Person. You that fear so much to lose your Money, get such Purse as will never decay, and make to yourselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, that when you fail, they may receive you into eternal Habitations.

29. Lastly, as the *Israelites*, when they had tasted of the Fruits of the Land of *Canaan*, desir'd with a most earnest Passion, to enjoy such a noble and delicious Country, and their Abode in the Wilderness became tedious and unsufferable: Likewise we who have the First-Fruits of the Spirit, and the Fore-taste of our heavenly Paradise; let us aspire with our Hearts to the heavenly *Canaan*, and let us long continually for those unspeakable Delights. All worldly Pleasures should have no relish with us, and the greatest Sweetness of this Life should be turned into Bitterness; so that we may often present *David's* Prayer unto God, *Remember me, O Lord, with the Favour that thou bearest unto thy People; O visit me with thy Salvation, that I may see the Good of thy chosen; that I may rejoyce in the Gladness of thy Nation, that I may glory with thine Inheritance,* Psal. cvi.

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To conclude this Discourse, seeing that we have no lasting City here below, but that we seek for that which is to come; seeing that we know not the Hour when God shall take us out of the World to introduce us into his holy *Jerusalem*, Heb. xi. Luke xxii. let us take heed that our Hearts be not overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and with the Cares of this Life, lest that Day surprize us unawares; and as the holy Apostles left their Nets to follow Jesus Christ, *Mat. xxiv.* let us also leave the vain Cares, the ill-grounded Fears and deceiving Hopes that intangle our Souls; that when it shall please God to call us, we may be ready to answer his heavenly Message. Let us accustom ourselves betime, to will what God willeth, and to obey him without Resistance. Let us cast all our Cares upon God, and repose ourselves upon his wise and fatherly Providence, 1 *Pet. v.* Let us look with Contempt upon the World, upon its vain Grandeur, and upon its decaying Riches; esteem not any thing upon Earth, nor that which Man is able to promise, or to procure; but esteem and value the blessed Advantages that we expect in Heaven, and that are disposed and entrusted in God's own Hands, 2 *Tim. i. Tit. ii.* Let us prefer *Job's* Dunghil and Ashes, before the proud Throne and glorious Monarchy of *Nebuchadnezzar*. Let us fancy the Beggary of poor *Lazarus* more happy, than the overflowing abundance of the rich Miser. Imprint in your Minds that blessed Saying of the Son of God, *What would it profit a Man if he gains the whole World, if he destroys himself and loseth his Soul?* Luke ix. Let us have always before our Eyes the Image of that rich Worldling, who had gathered much Wealth for his Soul, but his Soul was not wealthy nor rich before God. Remember what he saith to his Soul, *Soul, thou hast much Goods gathered up for many Years, rest thyself, eat, drink, and be merry; but what says God to him? Thou Fool, this very Night thy Soul shall be taken away from thee, and the things that*

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*that thou hast gather'd, whose shall they be?* Instead of studying how to enlarge our Barns and Cellars, and to increase our Revenues and Treasures, let us labour to set some Bounds to our Desires, and let us be content with what we have at present. Seeing we have but a Breath in our Nostrils, and that we are cloath'd with a mortal Body, let us not entertain such vast Designs, nor suffer our Longings to be perpetual. Let us always, in every Place, be ready to end our Life, to put the last Stone to its Building, or rather, let us be always in a Disposition of dissolving this earthly Tabernacle. Let us willingly break all the Bands and Ties that fasten us to this miserable Earth, that when Death shall come, it may have nothing to do but to cut the last String, by which our Soul is naturally joined to this languishing Body. Settle and fix your strongest Affections in Heaven, that where your Treasure is, your Hearts may be there also. Let us not be lull'd asleep, as the foolish Virgins; but having our Reins girded, and our Candles lighted, let us be prepared at every Moment, to go to meet our heavenly Spouse, and follow him into the Marriage Chamber. Let us belike a Ship at Anchor, ready to set sail with the first fair Wind, and as a Soldier entirely arm'd, that waits for the Day of Battle, and for the Signal to mount upon his Horse, that he may appear in the Field at the sound of the Trumpet. Let us send, beforehand, all our most precious Jewels, into the most glorious Palace of Eternity; that our Bag and Baggage being ready prepared, we may have nothing to do but to take our last Farewel. If any Consideration of Flesh and Blood hinders us, let us break asunder all these Bands by the Strength of our *Nazareth*, that is, by the Virtue of God's holy Spirit, which he hath been graciously pleased to grant unto us. And if the Persons that we love and cherish as tenderly as our Souls, or those whom we are to reverence and honour, labour to stir up the Bowels of our Compassion, and to impede us in our holy Resolutions, by base and earthly Considerations;



siderations; let us tell them as our Saviour did *Mary Magdalen*, *Touch me not, for I am going to my Father*, Joh. xx. Stop not my Course, for I hold already the Prize, and the promised Crown. In short, as *Abraham* let the Ram loose, whereof the Horns were taken in a Thicket, and offer'd it up in Sacrifice to God, *Gen. xxi.* so let us free our Minds from all worldly Cares and carnal Affections; let us offer them up all to God, as a sweet-smelling Sacrifice; let us present them as a Burnt-Offering, consume them in the Flames of an holy Zeal and Love of his divine Majesty. When the Christian shall be thus prepared, he shall never stand in fear of Death; he will say to it with an assur'd Countenance, Come when thou wilt, O Death, I desire no Reprieve: For a long while ago I have settled my Affairs, and wait for thee with Patience. The chief part of my self is not here below, my Heart is already ravish'd into Heaven, where God expects me with open Arms. Therefore notwithstanding thy fearful Darknes, and the Design that thou hast to destroy me, I will follow thee as courageously and as joyfully as *St. Peter* did the Angel of Night, that opened to him the Gates of his Prison, and freed him from his Chain, *Act. xii.*

A Prayer and Meditation for such as prepare for Death by a Renunciation of the World.

O Infinite Lord of Heaven and Earth, who disposest of Good and Evil by thy divine Providence and admirable Wisdom! thou hast not suffer'd us to have here an abiding City, that we might seek for that which is to come. Thou discoverest before our Eyes the Vanity and Inconstancy of all things under the Sun, that we might labour to attain to solid and everlasting Advantages. Thou hast plac'd and reserv'd in Heaven inexhaustible Treasures of Riches,

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Riches, uncorruptible Crowns of Glory, and eternal Triumphs, that thither we might transport our Hearts and Affections. The Source of heavenly Pleasures is with thee, that we might always be athirst for the strong and living God; and that we might desire, with an holy earnestness, to look upon thy beautiful and glorious Face. Most glorious Creator, seeing thou hast bestowed on me an immortal Soul, suffer me not to be so wretched, as to dote upon these perishing Vanities; and seeing thou hast made it of a spiritual and heavenly Nature, suffer me not to be so unhappy as to wallow in this miserable Dust of the Earth, or to cast myself into the Puddle and Dirt of carnal Lusts. Give me Grace to renounce the World, and all the Vanities that the World adores. Give me Grace to possess all these decaying things, as not possessing them; that I may trample upon all the Pomp and Glory of the Age, that I may consider that the Gold, the Silver, the precious Jewels, whereof the apparent Beauty deceives the carnal Eye of Man, is nothing else but concrete Earth, that will dissolve again into Dust; that I may remember that after my Decease, all these things will profit me no more than that Earth and Stones which shall cover my dead Corps, or the Wood or Lead which shall be given to it for a Coffin. Give me Grace to despise all the Honours and Dignities, after which the Men of the World run so impatiently. For they are but like a Shadow that passes away, and like the Smoak that ascendeth up out of our reach. Pluck out of my Heart the Cares of this Life, and all Solicitousness for the Earth, that Death may never surprize me unawares, and that there may be nothing to stop or hinder me from going to thee, when thou shalt be pleased to call me, that my Soul being totally disengaged and freed from all these Briars and Thorns, I may be ready always at every Moment, to be offered unto thee as a Living and a Burnt-Sacrifice. The Children of Israel waited for thine Orders to pitch and move their Camp; give me also Grace to be as ready prepared to live and die, to remain in this Tabernacle, and to depart out of it, when thou shalt send thy Warrant. And as this People went over the River Jordan with a wonderful Joy, to take Possession of the

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promised Land: O that I might also leave this miserable Wilderness with the Transports to enter into the celestial Canaan, where the Milk and Honey of divine Pleasure and of eternal Comforts flow, as in their natural Channel. O God, who art my Portion and mine Inheritance, cast me not away with the Men of the World, whose Portion is in this Life. Thou fillest their Paunch with thy good things, so that they are full and leave sufficient for their Babes. But as for me, all my Comfort is that I shall behold thy Face in Righteousness, and shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness, Amen.



CHAP. IX.

*The Fifth Remedy against the Fears of Death, is to forsake Vice, and to apply ourselves to the Practice of Piety and Sanctification.*

**G**OD is so wonderful in all his Works, and he governs all his Creatures in such a Manner, that draws from his very Enemies the Acknowledgment of his Truth. You have an excellent Example in Balaam, who beholding the Tents of the Children of Israel breaks out into this passionate Wish, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last End be like his*, Numb. xxviii. He was a wicked Varlet that loved the Wages of Iniquity, nevertheless he perceiv'd by that propheticall Light, with which his Soul was enlightned, how sweet and comfortable Death was to such as addicted themselves, in this Life, to the Service and Fear of Almighty God, and how different 'tis to the Death of the prophane Worldlings, who give themselves over to their Lusts, and delight in the unlawful Pleasures of the Flesh. For as Drunkards sleep with a disturbed and unquiet Fancy; likewise such as are drunken and full with the base and rotten Pleasures of this Life, if they be



be not hardned by Atheism, commonly depart out of this World with strange Frights and horrid Gripings of Conscience that cannot be exprefs'd. 'Tis otherwise with a good Christian; for as the Handicrafts Man who hath work'd all the Day in his Shop, and the Husbandman who hath wearied himself in following his Plough, lays himself down at Night in Peace: So 'tis with a good Christian, who hath carefully attended the Works of Piety and Mercy in this Life. He takes his last Sleep with great Quiet of Mind and Satisfaction of his Soul. As righteous *Jacob*, when he travell'd a Journey to his Mother's Friends, at his Father's Command, was not frightened to see the Sun go down, tho' he was in the midst of an open Field, *Gen. xxviii.* but he laid him down in Peace, and slept sweetly, having no other Bed but the Earth, no other Pillow but a Stone, no other Covering but the Heavens, nor other Curtains than the dark Shadows of the Night. Likewise a Soul sanctified with the Spirit of God, that walks in all the Commands of his heavenly Father, shall never be astonish'd. For wheresoever the Sun goes down, wheresoever Death arrests him, he will look upon himself as in another *Bethel*, he will sleep quietly in the Lord Jesus, and in the most cruel Death, he will feel unspeakable and glorious Joys, and the Peace of God which passeth all Understanding, *Acts xxiii.*

We may take notice of this blessed Disposition in the Apostle *St. Paul*, who had behaved himself with a good Conscience towards God, and towards Man, *1 Cor. xv.* He had labour'd more in the Ministry than all the other Apostles, therefore he stood in no Fear of Death's Approaches. But rather we may see him full of Expectations and Desires to pass thro' Death into Glory and eternal Felicity. This Disposition is no less remarkable in *Stephen*, the first Martyr of Christ, *Acts vi.* In the midst of the most grievous Torments he had a Countenance shining as that of an Angel, which was a certain Testimony of his inward Peace of Conscience,

science, and of the extraordinary Joy of his Soul. For as the wise Man informs us, *A merry Heart maketh a cheerful Countenance*, Prov. xv. From the same Wisdom proceeds this other Oracle, that foretels unto every one what shall happen unto him, *The Wicked is driven away in his Wickedness, but the Righteous hath Hope in his Death*, Prov. xiv. Eccl. i. To this agrees the excellent Saying of *Jesus* the Son of *Sirach*, *It shall be well at the last with him who fears God, he shall find Favour at the Day of his Death*. This Life is but a Moment that flies away apace, yet it determines our eternal State. It raises us to the highest Glory of Heaven, or else it casts us headlong into the deepest Abyss of eternal Misery. For what a Man soweth, that he shall reap; he that soweth in the Flesh, shall reap of the Flesh, Corruption; but he that soweth in the Spirit, shall reap of the Spirit, eternal Life.

If you are afraid of a cruel and unhappy Death, keep yourselves from an evil and profane Life. For commonly as a Man's Life is, so is his Death. The most part of those who live in filthy Lusts and Impiety, depart with hardned Hearts, or in Despair. God's Patience wearied out, turns into a just Resentment and Wrath. Commonly, God leaves at the Hour of Death such as have left him in the Course of their Lives. He is inexorable to the Cries and Sighs of such as have shut their Ears and Hearts to his holy Word, and his fatherly Admonitions. He laughs at the Amazement and most sensible Torments of those who trample upon his sacred Commands, as he tells us, *Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my Hand and no Man regarded, but ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would none of my Reproof; I also will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your Fear cometh*, Pro. i.

King *Abab* desired to hear a grateful Prophecy of happy Things, of Victory over the *Syrian* Army; nevertheless he continued in his Impieties and Tyranny: Therefore the Prophet *Micah* was not afraid of his Displeasure, but tells him boldly of the approaching Judgment

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Judgment of God, which hang'd over his guilty Head. Likewise some Sinners desire to be flatter'd and sooth'd up in their Extravagances; they expect, notwithstanding their Crimes, Promises for Joy and Prosperity. But we should be false Prophets possess'd with a lying Spirit, if we did not foretel to such People, that a most lamentable and miserable Death hastens apace upon them; our Charity for them would be cruel, if we did not labour to save them by Fear, as out of a Fire; if we did not shew them Hell with its Jaws open, ready to swallow them up, and the eternal Torments wherewith God will punish all impenitent and hardned Sinners. Knowing what God's Vengeance is, we must persuade Men to embrace Faith and Righteousness; and if we did fail in this our Duty, their Blood would be required at our Hands.

To what Purpose have the Heathen Philosophers discoursed so learnedly of the Shortness of our Life? To what Purpose have many of their Princes entertain'd *Mementos* of their Mortality, and slightly passed over such Thoughts whilst they reap'd little Benefit from them, because they did not prevail upon them to reform their Lives, and by Consequence to prepare for a blessed Death: 'Twas also to no Purpose that *Balaam* desir'd so passionately to die the Death of the Righteous, and that his last End might be like a just Man's, *Numb. xxiii.* because he lived the Life of Sinners, and continued in their Abominations and Idolatry, *Numb. xxxi.* Therefore died he as they, and was comprehended in their Punishment. As he was a Partner in their Crimes, it was but just and reasonable that he should share in their Calamity, and be Partaker of their Torments.

To abandon Vice and Sin, is to take from Death its Venom, and all its fiery Darts. 'Tis to pluck from this furious Beast its Teeth and Claws. 'Tis to break the Cords and Chains, by which the Devil drags us into eternal Damnation. 'Tis to destroy the Monsters that fright us, and stifle the Furies that pursue us. In short,

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it tends to change Hell and its grievous Torments into Heaven and its Glory. There was never yet any Person that lived an holy and religious Life, but he died happily in the Favour of God. Now that the Lord knocks, open unto him the Doors of your Hearts, and at the Hour of Death, he will open unto you the Gates of Heaven. Present and give him whilst you are alive, your Bodies and Souls, and doubtless he will accept them, and confirm the Gift with his own Seal. Here below, he will enrich you with his Graces, and crown you at last with his Glory. *Blessed are they that lie in the Lord*; but to die in the Lord, we must live to the Lord, that we may be able to say with St. Paul, *Whether we live, we live to the Lord, whether we die, we die to the Lord, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's*.

To persuade us to this religious Duty, we must consider in the first Place the Command that he gives us of loving him, fearing him, repenting of our Sins, and of walking in his holy Laws. Unto this he exorts us in the Writings of the *Old Testament*, as in *Deuteronomy vi. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might*. And in *Isa. vi. Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your Fear and your Dread*. And in Chap. iv. *Let the Wicked forsake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon him, to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*. In the second Chapter of *Joel*, *Turn ye to the Lord with all your Heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning*. And in the first Chapter of *Malachy*, *A Son honours his Father, and a Servant his Lord; If therefore I am your Father, where is the Honour due unto me? If I am your Lord, where is the Fear of my Name?*

2. Jesus Christ is not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfil it, *Mat. v.* Therefore in the *New Testament*, he calls upon us as frequently to study Piety and Virtue. As in *St. Matthew v. Let your Light so shine before Men, that they seeing your good Works may glorify*

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glorify your Father which is in Heaven. And in the 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter of Mark, Repent ye and believe the Gospel. And St. Paul to the Romans, exhorteth in this manner, I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of God, that ye present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable Service, and be not conformed to this World; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your Mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect Will of God; hate evil, and cleave to that which is good, Rom. xii. And in Chap. xiii. Walk honestly as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in Strife and Envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof. And in 1 Cor. xvi. Awake to Righteousness, and sin not. And in Ephesians iv. Put off, concerning the former Conversation, the old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts, and put ye on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness. And in Colos. iii. Mortify your Members which are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleaness, inordinate Affections, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness, which is Idolatry. In 1 Thess. v. Watch, and be sober, abstain from all Appearance of Evil. And in Phil. iv. Whatsoever Things are true, whatsoever Things are honest, whatsoever Things are just, whatsoever Things are pure, whatsoever Things are lovely, whatsoever Things are of good report, if there be any Virtue, and if there be any Praise, think on these Things. I might with as much Ease number the Stars of the Sky, as reckon up all the Passages that call upon us, and exhort us to an holy Life.

3. God not only commands us to apply ourselves to Holiness, Justice and Innocency of Life; but he proposes himself for our Example, that as the obedient and good Children delight to imitate their Father's Virtues, we also might endeavour to copy out in our Lives, the divine Perfections of our heavenly Father, and imprint in our Hearts his sacred Image. Therefore in Levit. xi. he tells us, *Be ye holy, for I am holy.*

And

And St. Peter repeats the same Passage in this manner, *As he that called you is holy, so be ye also holy in all manner of Conversation; for it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy, 1 Pet. ii.* And our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ gives us the same Lesson, *Love your Enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that persecute you, that you may be the Children of your Father that is in Heaven, Mat. v.* For he causeth his Sun to rise upon the good and bad, and sends his Rain upon the just and the unjust; be ye therefore perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect. The Apostle St. Paul speaks in the same manner to the Ephesians, *Be ye Followers of God as dear Children; put off the old Man, and put on the new Man, which is created according to God in Justice and true Holiness, Chap. vi.* And in Colos. iii. *Now put off all these, Anger, Wrath, Malice, Blasphemy, filthy Communication, out of your Mouth. Lye not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old Man, with his Deeds, and have put on the new Man, which is renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that created him.*

4. Meditate seriously upon the excellent and precious Promises that God hath given to such as addict themselves to Piety and good Works. As in *Exod. xx.* I shew Mercy unto a thousand Generations of them that love me, and keep my Commandments. And *1 Sam. ii.* I will honour them that honour me. And in *Isaiah iii.* he says to the Righteous, that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the Fruit of their Doings. And in *Mat. v.* our Saviour saith, *Blessed are the pure in Heart, for they shall see God.* And in *Chap. vi.* *Seek first the Kingdom of God and its Righteousness, and all these Things shall be added unto you, over and above.* And in *Chap. vii.* *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.* St. Paul speaks thus to the Romans, *If by the Spirit you mortify the Deeds of the Flesh, you shall live, Chap. viii.* And in the 1<sup>st</sup> Epist. to Timothy, *Piety or Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the Promises of this present Life, and of that*



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which is to come. And in Rev. xxi. *Blessed and holy is he who hath part in the first Resurrection, the second Death shall have no Power over him.*

5. Consider that the whole World trembles at the Denunciation of the Judgments, with which God threatens to punish all impenitent Sinners, as in *Exod. xx. I am the Lord thy God, strong, jealous, visiting the Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, unto the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me.* And in *1 Sam. ii. I will honour them that honour me, and will despise them that despise me.* And in *St. Matth. xii. Of every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give an Account at the Day of Judgment.* And in *St. John iii. Except a Man be born of Water and the Spirit, that is, of a Spirit purifying like Water, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* And in *Rom. viii. They who are in the Flesh cannot please God.* And in *1 Cor. vi. Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolators, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God.* And the Apostle to the Hebrews is not content to tell us, *That without Holiness no Man shall see God;* but he saith something more, *That if we sin wilfully, after we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a terrible Expectation of Judgment, and fiery Indignation shall devour the Adversaries; for our God is a consuming Fire,* Chap. x. And in the Revelations, 'tis not only said, that in the holy Jerusalem there shall no unclean thing enter, or that committeth Abomination, or a Lye, and that God will shut out the Dogs, the Witches, the Fornicators, the Murderers, the Idolaters, and whosoever doth love or make a Lye, Chap. ii. 22. But the Spirit of God assures us, that the timorous, that is, such as are more afraid of Man than of God, the Unbelieving, the Execrable, and Murderers, the Fornicators and Witches, the Idolaters and Liars shall have their Portion in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second Death

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6. Tho' we should speak in the Language of Angels, tho' we should give all our Goods to nourish the Poor, and tho' we should give our Body to be burnt, if we have not Charity, we are but like the sounding Brass, and like the tinkling Cymbal. Tho' we should be able to perform Signs and Wonders, if we be not cloathed with Innocency and Holiness, if we be not adorn'd with Meekness and Love, Christ will at last treat us as the foolish Virgins, with a *Depart from me, I know ye not.* Tho' we should be able to cast the Devil out of other Men, it will avail us nothing, unless we can cast him out of our own Hearts, with all the wicked Lusts that he cherishes there. To what purpose shall such cry out at the great Day, *Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name? Have we not cast out Devils in thy Name? Have we not done many Miracles in thy Name?* Jesus will return them this sad Answer, *Depart from me, ye Workers of Iniquity.*

7. Consider, that whatsoever be your Portion of the Advantages of this Life, when you shall come to die, you shall carry away neither your Riches, your Honours, nor your Pleasures. But if you be rich in Faith and good Works, if you be cloathed with Holiness, and crowned with Righteousness; if Piety and the Service of God be your Delight, you shall carry away out of the World this spiritual Treasure, the celestial Glory, and his angelical Satisfaction. 'Tis what the Holy Spirit teacheth when it tells us, *Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their Labours, and their Works follow them,*

8. Let us always have before our Eyes the blessed Examples of so many Saints, who have trac'd us the Way to Heaven by their Piety and good Works; they are entred into the Paradise of God, and the Glory of his Kingdom. 'Tis reported of a Painter, that when he had a Design to represent an accomplish'd Beauty, he borrow'd from divers Objects the Excellencies and Perfections with which he was to adorn his Picture. From the Lilies he took their Whiteness, from the Roses

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their red Tincture, from another Object the Wonder of the Eye, from another the Coral of the Lips, and so of the other Parts. Likewise to restore in our Souls the Image of God defaced by Sin, we must borrow the Virtues and Excellencies of primitive Men. For Example, represent always to yourselves *Abel's* Innocency, *Enoch's* holy Life, *Noah's* Justice, *Abraham's* Faith, *Lot's* Hospitality, *Isaac's* Obedience, the Faithfulness of *Jacob*, the Chastity of *Joseph*, the Patience of *Job*, the Meekness of *Moses*, the Zeal of *Phineas*, the Constancy of *David*, the Wisdom of *Solomon*, the Piety of *Josias*, the Prayers of *Daniel*, the Tears of *Jeremiah*, the Fasting of *Hester*, the holy Earnestness of the Woman of *Canaan*, the Devotion of *Cornelius*, the Charity of the *Samaritan*, the Alms of *Dorcas*, and of the poor Widow, the *Publican's* Humility, the good Thief's Repentance, the Tears of *Mary Magdalen*, the Weepings of *Peter*, the undaunted Courage of St. *Paul*, and his indefatigable Spirit, and the glorious Martyrdom of St. *Stephen*, and of so many noble Souls, of all Ages and Sexes, who have gone to the Torments with as much Joy, as to Feasts and to Triumphs; and who have sealed with their Blood the Truth of the Gospel, with an undaunted Resolution. *Seeing therefore that we are encompassed with so great a Cloud of Witnesses, let us pursue with Constancy the Race that is set before us.*

9. Chiefly, *Let us look to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith.* For he hath left us an Example that we might follow his Footsteps. All the Virtues that we admire in those faithful Souls, are but like many little Beams of the Son of Righteousness, and a weak Image of his Glory. There is no Fire so perfect, but yields a Smoak; nor Righteousness so accomplish'd, but hath its Imperfections, whilst we are cloath'd with this weak Flesh. The Behaviour of the most Holy and Perfect, is spotted with many Infirmities; but our Lord and Saviour is the Lamb without Spot or Blemish, in whose Mouth there was no Guile. For 'twas necessary that they should have such a High Priest, who



is holy, blameless, separated from Sinners. The perfect Image of all Virtues was never found on any mortal Man on Earth; but Jesus Christ is the fairest amongst the Sons of Men, his Lips are full of Grace; in him alone we have a perfect Model of Virtues, and of all imaginable Perfection. Therefore when the Apostle had persuaded the *Romans* to renounce the Lusts of the Flesh, Drunkenness, Anger, Envy, and such like Sins, instead of making an Enumeration of the Virtues opposite to these Vices, he thinks it sufficient to propose Christ's holy Example, *Put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, saith he, to teach us, that all the Virtues and Graces center and meet in the sacred Person of our Saviour Jesus Christ, in the highest Degrees of Perfection.

10. We are so much the more obliged to imitate Jesus Christ, and to imprint in our Hearts his holy Image, because that he is not only our Father, our Lord, our King, but he is also the blessed Head of that Body, whereof we are Members. 'Tis not proper to unite defil'd and prophane Members to an Head so glorious and so holy. Whosoever gives himself over to his Lusts and Delights, in the Corruption of Sin, maims, as much as in him lies, that sacred Body of the Son of God. This Consideration drew from St. Paul this Expression, *Shall I take the Members of Christ for to make them the Members of an Whore?*

11. The divine Spirit dwelling in our Hearts, is a great Obligation to Holiness of Life. Know you not that you are the Temple of God, and the holy Ghost dwelleth in you? 1 Cor. iii. Shall we be so base as to uncover our filthy and dirty Thoughts before so holy and divine a Guest? Shall we be so bold as to erect upon his Altar, Idols that may provoke him to Jealousy? His Eyes are so clean and pure, that they cannot suffer the Sight of Iniquity and Sin. 'Tis that which most afflicts and grieves him; therefore when St. Paul had advised the *Ephesians*, *That no corrupt Communication should proceed out of their Mouth, but that which is good*

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*to the use of edifying, that it may minister Grace unto the Hearers, he adds immediately after, Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the Day of Redemption. And if there be any that are not moved with the Presence of such a glorious Person, let him tremble at this fearful Threatning, If any destroy the Temple of God, God will destroy him, 2 Cor. iii.*

12. There were two Tables of Stone in the Ark of God's Covenant, where God himself had written his Law, which he gave to his People by the Ministry of Moses, 1 Kin. vi. Seeing that the God of all Mercy hath chosen thy Soul to be his Sanctuary, and the Pavilion of his Glory, his sacred Commandments must be there engraven upon the Table of thy Heart; thou must be mov'd with an earnest Desire for the Service of God, and for an exact Conformity to his holy Will, that we may be able to say to you, what St. Paul said to the Christians of his Days, *Ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ, written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in the Tables of Stone, but in the fleshy Tables of the Heart, 2 Cor. iii.* And that thou mayest say with the Royal Prophet, *My God, my Delight hath been to do thy Will; thy Law is within me.*

13. Let us represent to our selves continually, the great and many Obligations that we have to fear God, to love him, to serve him. He is the most perfect of all Beings, he is Perfection it self, infinitely lovely; so that if there were neither Hell to punish us, nor Heaven to reward us, he ought to be serv'd and reverenc'd, because of himself and his divine Perfections. This Consideration caused *Jeremiah* to break forth into these lofty Expressions, *Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations; for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise Men of the Nations, and in all their Kingdoms, there is none like unto thee? Jer. x.*

14. Whilst we are travelling here below, we are not capable of an high and celestial Meditation. It belongs only to the Angels, whom God hath invested with Light and Glory; and to the heavenly Spirits

Spirits whom he hath admitted to the Contemplation of his Face. Let us therefore seriously consider the Blessings and Favours which we have received from this great God, who hath created us in his own Image, and who hath made us to be the Master-pieces of all his inferior Wonders. He hath put in us an Epitome of the Beauties and Perfections of the World. He hath given us a Being, as to the Sun, Moon and Stars; a Life like the Plants, Sense as to the Animals, Understanding as to the Angels. In short, he hath infused into this Body, fashion'd with his own Fingers, an Immortal Soul of an heavenly Substance, a beam of his Glory, and a living Image of his Godhead. My Soul, therefore bless the Lord, and all that is within me bless his holy Name; my Soul, bless the Lord, and forget not all his Benefits, *Psal. ciii.*

'Tis for Man's sake God hath stretch'd out the Heavens, settled the Earth, poured out the Waters, and prescrib'd Limits to the roaring Sea. For Man's sake this gracious Creator hath adorn'd the Heavens with such a number of beautiful Stars, hath given to the Moon its various Motions, with its wonderful Influences, hath placed in the Sun such a bountiful Source of Light, and hath appointed the invariable Succession of the Seasons, of the Days, Months and Years. For Man's Advantage, and lawful Recreation, so many Birds sing and fly in the open Air, such prodigious numbers of Fishes swim in the Seas and Rivers; the Earth is beautified with so many delicate Flowers, brings forth so many wholesome Herbs, and pleasant Fruits, nourisheth so many kind of Animals, and ingenders in its Bowels Gold, Silver, and precious Stones. In a Word, for Man's sake God has created the World, filled it full of so many Riches, and beautified it with so many excellent Perfections. Therefore 'tis no wonder if the Royal Prophet is ravish'd into an holy Admiration, and bursts forth into these Expressions, *O God, what is mortal Man, that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man that thou dost regard him! Thou hast made*



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*made him a little lesser than the Angels, thou hast crown'd him with Glory and Honour, thou hast establisht him Governor over the Works of thine Hands, thou hast put all things under his Feet, the Sheep, and the Oxen, the Beasts of the Fields, the Birds of the Air, and the Fishes of the Sea. If the Example of this great Prophet is not able to stir you up, and persuade you to the Fear and Worship of God, by the Consideration of the wonderful Works of the Creation; hear what the Angel declares that took his Flight through the middle of the Heavens, having the eternal Gospel in his Hand: Fear God and give him Glory, worship him that liveth for ever and ever; for he hath made the Heavens and the Earth, the Sea and the Fountains of Waters.*

16. We have not only in God our Life, Motion and Being; but he hath not left himself without Witness, in doing good and sending Rains from Heaven, fruitful Seasons, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladness. He nourishes us with Manna, and gives us to drink of his Abundance. He overshadows us with his Protection, and enlightens us with his heavenly Fires. He hath always his Eyes open to our Calamities, and his Ears to our Sighs and Groans. He is always near them that call upon him, yea, them that call upon him faithfully. Let us therefore say as *David, I love the Lord, because he hath heard the Voice of my Supplication, for he hath enclined his Ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him all the Days of my Life, Psal. xiv. Psal. cxvi.*

17. Meditate often upon the Advantages, that are common to thee with the rest of Christians, and upon the Blessings and Favours which God hath vouchsafed to thy Person in particular. Remember how many times he hath sent his Assistance from above, how he hath wrought Miracles to deliver thee from the Evils that threatned thee. Consider how liberal he hath been to thee in the whole course of thy Life, what admirable and noble means he hath employed to crown thee with his most precious Favour; then thou wilt say with *Jacob, O God I am not worthy of the least*

of all thy Mercies, and of all the Truth which thou hast shewed unto thy Servant, Gen. xxxii. And with David, Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful Works, which thou hast done, and thy Thoughts which are to us-ward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee. If I should declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbred. And being ravished into an holy Admiration, thou wilt say in the Language of the same Prophet, O God, who is like unto thee, who when thou hast made me see many Distresses and Evils, at last thou hast restored me to Life, and drawn me out of the Depths of the Earth? Psal. lxxi. Thou shalt increase my Greatness again, thou wilt comfort me. And elsewhere, What shall I render to the Lord, for all the Benefits that he hath done unto me? Psal. cxvi.

18. The Consideration of God's redeeming us, chiefly requires us to deny ourselves, and consecrate ourselves to his Service. For Slaves don't belong to themselves, but to him who hath redeemed them and paid their Ransom. As when God had delivered the Children of *Israel* from the *Egyptian* Bondage, he gave them his Laws and Ordinances in Mount *Sinai*; thus God hath redeem'd us from the Tyranny of the Devil, of the World, of Sin, of Death, of Hell, and from the Power of all his Enemies, that we might serve him without Fear in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Life, *Luke* i. He hath given himself a Ransom for us, that we might become a peculiar People to him, zealous of good Works, *Tit.* ii. You are bought with a Price, glorify then God in your Bodies, and your Souls that belong to God, *1 Cor.* vi.

19. One Love must kindle another. The sacred Fire come down from Heaven must inflame our Hearts with an holy Zeal for his Glory. God hath had so much Love for us, that he hath given his only Son, that believing we might not perish, but have everlasting Life. He hath not spared his Son, who is the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person. He hath delivered him to Death for us, yea,

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yea, to the ignominious Death of the Crofs. And is it not juſt that we ſhould love him above all worldly things, a God ſo good and merciful? Is it not juſt that we ſhould love nothing but him, and for his ſake? Is it not reaſonable that we ſhould offer unto him our Bodies and Souls, as a living and holy Sacrifice, pleaſing to his Eye? And if we have any Luſt that offends him, is it not juſt that we ſhould willingly leave it betimes, when it ſhould appear as uſeful to us as our Hands and Feet, and as dear as the Apple of our Eyes? Whoſoever doth not deny himſelf, is not worthy of him, *Mat. x.*

20. We muſt treat the Body of Sin, which the holy Scriptures ſtile the *old Man*, and the *firſt Adam*, almoſt in the ſame Manner, as Chriſt the *new Man*, and the *ſecond Adam*, was treated upon the Crofs, *Rom. vi.* Inſtead of flattering it, and ſeeking to ſatisfy its Luſts, we muſt deprive it of all its Pleaſures, make it drink Vinegar and Gall, tear its Head with Thorns, bind and chain its Affections, and nail them to the Crofs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with all its inordinate and brutiſh Deſires. *Mortify therefore your Members that are upon Earth, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiſcence, and Covetouſneſs, which is Idolatry, Gal. v. Coloſ. iii.*

21. To live in Sin, to delight our ſelves in Iniquity, is to frustrate, as much as in us lies, our good Lord, from that principal End which he deſign'd in leaving for a while the celeftial Abode of his Glory and Immortality. For he is come into the World to deſtroy the Works of the Devil. Now the chief Work of the Devil, the great Enemy of our Salvation, in which he takes moſt Delight and Glory, is Sin, with which he enſnares Mankind. For by Sin, Death, and all kind of Calamities are uſher'd into the World, *John iii. Rom. v.*

22. 'Tis to trample upon the only Son of God, to affront the Spirit of Grace, and eſteem the Blood of the



the Covenant a prophane thing. 'Tis to render ineffectual the Death and Passion of our good Redeemer, and pull down his Crofs: For he hath carried our Sins in his Body upon the Crofs, that dying unto Sin, we might live unto Righteousness. He hath given himself for his Church, to sanctify it, and render it a *glorious Church*, not having Spot or Wrinkle, nor any such thing. If the Blood of Bulls and of Goats, and the Ashes of an Heifer sprinkled, did sanctify the Uncleaness of the Flesh, how much more shall the Blood of Christ, *who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without Spot to God, purge your Consciences from dead Works to serve the living God?* Heb. ix.

23. Our Lord and Saviour was not only dead, but also buried, to teach us to bury also with him our Sins, and shut up in his sacred Tomb all our carnal Lusts. Don't you know, all ye that have been baptiz'd into Jesus Christ, that you have been baptiz'd into his Death? We are then buried with him in his Death by Baptism.

24. This glorious Saviour is risen from the Dead, and hath left the Sepulchre with his funeral Attire, to teach us to rise to Newness of Life, and to leave in our Grave the Sin that encompasseth us, and the Ties of our Corruption, that bind us so fast. To speak in St. Paul's Language, *As Jesus Christ is risen from the dead by the Glory of the Father, we also ought to walk in newness of life. For if we are made one plant with him by a conformity to his death, we shall also be one, by a conformity to his resurrection; and as Christ, who is risen from the dead, dies no more, death hath no more dominion over him; likewise we ought not to apply our members as instruments of iniquity unto Sin; but we ought to apply them unto God, as being made alive from the dead, Rom. vi. He is dead and risen again, that he might have dominion over the dead and the living; if any be in Jesus Christ, let him be a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new, Rom. xiv. 2 Cor. v.*

25. Jesus

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25. Jesus Christ, after his glorious Resurrection, ascended up into Heaven, to lift up thither our Hearts, and to draw thither our Affections; and to teach us to reform our Manners, to live an Holy, Angelical and Celestial Life. If you are risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Jesus Christ sits at the right Hand of God; think upon things above, and not upon things on the Earth, *Col. iii.*

26. There is nothing in the World so lovely as Virtue: 'Tis the Delight and Pleasure of Heaven, the Daughter of the living God, and the true and lively Image of the great Creator. O blessed Dress of a Christian Soul! O rich and precious Ornament of God's Children! O heavenly Grace! what rare and strong Charms hast thou, to win the Hearts and Affections of all such as behold thy perfect and divine Beauty?

27. On the contrary, there is nothing so ugly and ill-favoured as Sin: 'Tis a woful Monster of Hell, and a frightful Image of Satan. I confess, it disguises itself, and takes a beautiful Appearance; but if you lift up this borrow'd Mask, you shall perceive the Devil's fearful Looks, and the Depths of Hell.

28. Faithful Souls, weigh in the Balance of his Sanctuary the dreadful Evils that Sin has brought into the World. It has blotted out God's Image, and defac'd the Beauty of the Creation. It hath separated Heaven and Earth, and kindled a grievous War between God and Man. 'Tis an heavy Burden, under which Nature itself groans: For because of Sin, all Creatures sigh, and are in Labour until now.

29. It continues yet its woful Effects: For 'tis Sin that grieves the holy Spirit, afflicts the Angels, offends the Weak, hardens the Ignorant, and that gives an occasion to the Enemies of God to blaspheme his holy Name, and curse his Gospel, *Rom. viii.* 'Tis Sin that gratifies the Devil, rejoyceth Hell, upholds the tottering Walls of *Babylon*, strengthens the Kingdom of the Prince of Darkness, and that causeth him

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him to work with Efficacy in the Hearts of the Children of Disobedience, *Eph. ii.*

30. Lift up your Eyes to the Cross of Jesus Christ, and you shall perceive how abominable Sin is. For neither in Heaven, nor on Earth, could be found an Offering able to make Expiation for it. God hath chosen rather to punish it in the Person of his only begotten Son, than to leave it unpunished. O how grievous and deep is the Stain of Sin, seeing that nothing but the Blood of a God can wash and cleanse it !

31. When you meditate upon our Lord's Death and Passion, exclaim not against *Judas's* Treason, the *Pharisees* Envy, the People's Mutiny ; don't lay the Blame upon the Impiety of *Caiaphas*, the Injustice of *Pilate*, or *Herod's* Scoffs and Jest, nor upon the Cruelty of the *Roman* Soldiers ; but be angry against your own Sins, and let an holy Displeasure rise in you against your Iniquities and Crimes. Say to yourselves, our Sins, our Sins alone have betrayed Christ's innocent Body, bound and fastned the Lord of Glory to this ignominious Cross, and deliver'd him into the Executioner's Hands. Our Sins have crowned him with Thorns, nail'd him to the Wood, deliver'd to him Gall and Vinegar to drink. In short, our Sins have pierc'd his Hands and Feet, and open'd his Side. You would abhor the Sight and Acquaintance of the Hangman, that should have fastned your Father to the Gallows, and you would scorn to kiss his bloody Hands. How much more abominable shall we be to God and his holy Angels, if we cherish and delight to entertain Sin ? Whereas we should be stirred up against it with an holy Zeal, and earnest desire of Revenge. Instead of nailing to the Cross this unmerciful Parricide, and crushing to pieces this hellish Monster, if we feed and nourish it in our Bowels, we shall then be guilty of crucifying afresh the Son of God, and putting him to an open Shame ; guilty of trampling him under Feet, and of esteeming the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith we are sanctify'd, an unholy thing.

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32. Consider seriously the fearful Effects that Sin produces in you: Have you never been sensible of the horrid and cruel Torments of a poor Soul disturbed with the Sight of its Crimes? How sharp and piercing are the Remorses of a Conscience awaken'd from a prophane sleep? 'Tis a Pain and an Anguish that can't be expressed; it causes our Head to dissolve into Water, our Eyes to become a Fountain of Tears; it causeth our Blood to be congealed, our Skin to become black, our Bones to be crack'd and broken. 'Tis a common saying, that Punishment follows the Sin close at the Heels: But imagine, that it keeps always its Company, and is a Rack and Torture that never leaves the guilty; For *there is no Peace to the wicked, saith my God, Isa. xlviii.*

33. Whereas there is no Satisfaction like to that of a good Christian, who loves his God sincerely, and worships him in Spirit and in Truth. There is no kind of Delight to be compar'd to that of a regenerate Soul, that applies itself without Hypocrisy to the Works of Piety and Holiness, *Job iv.* for the Quiet of the Soul, and the Peace of Conscience are of more worth than great Treasures, than Scepters and Crowns. Therefore the wise *Solomon* tells us, that the righteous Man's Heart is a continual Feast, *Pr. xv.* To persuade us that there is nothing like to this hidden Manna, to this spiritual Food, that the World knows not, and to these angelical and divine Pleasures, the holy Apostle informs us, that 'tis unspeakable and glorious Joy, and a Peace of God that passeth all Understanding, *Phil. iv.*

34. If any Delight or Pleasure accompanies Vice, 'tis but in appearance, superficial, as a Dream it vanisheth away; for the Triumph of the Wicked is of a short Continuance, and the Joy of the Hypocrite is but for a Moment. There is always some Thorn, some Grief hidden, and secret; in their Laughter their Heart is afflicted, and their Joy is cut off by Sorrow, *Prov. xiv.*

35. But the holy Joys and celestial Delights of one that fears God, and that worships him in Purity and Innocency

Innocency of Life, are solid and lasting; they cast a deep Root in the very bottom of our Hearts, and enter into the Joints and Marrow, and disperse themselves all over the inward Parts. The Gibbets, the Wheels, and the most grievous Torments of this Life, cannot pluck these Joys from us, but they comfort the Soul in the midst of the greatest Distresses, and heal up the broken Bones.

*'Tis the French Custom to break notable Offenders upon a Cart-Wheel.*

36. The Worldlings become weary, tired with the Accomplishment of their Lusts, and are afflicted at their greatest Success. They loath at last all their carnal Sports, and their greatest Sweetness turns into Bitterness; we grow out of Taste with the Pleasures of Sin, so that we begin at last to abhor them. 'Tis what *Zophar* intends to shew us, when speaking of the Wicked, he saith, *His Meat in his Bowels is turned, it is the Gall of Asps within him, he hath swallowed down Riches, and he shall vomit them up again; God shall cast them out of his Belly, Job xx.*

37. 'Tis otherwise with them who apply their Hearts to the Fear and Service of God, and that find his Yoke easy, and his Burden light, *Mat. xi.* They take great Satisfaction in the Ways of Righteousness, they run with an holy Freedom to their happy End, and to the Prize of their spiritual Calling. The more they drink of the Waters of *Siloah*, the more they thirst; their Zeal is like an holy Fire, that never saith 'tis enough, *Prov. x.* As the Prophet *Moses*, after he had been forty Days and forty Nights conversing with God in his holy Mountain, came down with a glorious Countenance, shining as bright as the Light, with two Tables of the Law in his Hands: Likewise a Christian Soul that hath been lifted up to God by frequent Prayers, and been conversing with him in devout Meditation, cannot hide its spiritual Joys, and its unspeakable Delights; it burns with an earnest Desire of glorifying God, and of pleasing him in all things. When the Apostle *St. Peter* saw our Saviour transfigured upon Mount *Tabor*, he was

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ravish'd and transported in such a Manner, that he cried out, *Lord, it is good for us to dwell here, let us make three Tabernacles*: Thus the good Christian, who is enlightned from above, is never weary in the Company of God; if he should live several Ages, he would not believe that he had too much Time to serve his Creator, to worship his Divine Majesty, and to refresh himself with the unspeakable Pleasures of his Presence. As the time of *Jacob's* Service seemed to him but a few Days, because of the Love that he had for *Rachel*; thus the Days that we spend in the Service of God seem to be but a few Hours or Moments, in case our Love for God be earnest and sincere.

38. Represent to yourselves the fearful Curse denounc'd against the Wicked and Profane, *Gen. xxix.* They carry about 'em every where the Marks of God's Anger and just Revenge, they are the Objects of his Hatred, and odious to the Publick: They who flatter and fawn upon them most for their own Advantage, abominate and curse them in their Hearts; and they, who out of a servile Fear seem to honour and worship them in the Light of the Sun, would be many times very joyful to dance upon their Graves, and to erect a Gallows to hang them thereon.

39. 'Tis not so with good Men, they are honoured by God and Man, and their greatest Enemies admire their Virtues. Let us be never so poor and contemptible in the World, we are rich and noble enough, if we fear God as we ought, and obey his holy Will: For the Fear of the Lord is our chief Treasure, 'tis our Crown, our Diadem, and our greatest Ornament.

40. The wicked Man is frightened and troubled of his own Accord, he trembles in the midst of his Guards, and flies when no Man pursues; all things scare him, he is jealous, and distrusts his best Friends, his Children are suspected, and in the Embraces of his dearest Wife, he slumbers with an unquiet Spirit.

41. 'Tis otherwise with a good Man, he marches every where with an Head lifted up, and his Heart rejoiceth



rejoyceth in a perfect Tranquillity of Mind. For there is no Bulwark like that of a good Conscience; 'tis like a Wall of Brass, that abides and withstands the Batteries of Times and Seasons. He that fears God is free from all other Fears, *Psal. cxxv.* The Finger of God, that hath settled in his Soul the Dread of his holy Name, banisheth all other Apprehensions, *Psal. cxii.* He is like Mount *Sion*, that cannot be mov'd; he fears no ill Report, his Soul is firmly fixed upon God; in the midst of his greatest Dangers, and violent Storms, he saith with *David*, *The Lord is my Light, and my Deliverance, of whom should I be afraid? The Lord is the Strength of my Life, whom then shall I fear? O God, thou art a Buckler round about me, my Glory, and the lifter up of my Head; I have laid myself down, I have slept, and I have awaked, for the Lord upholds me; I will not fear thousands of People when they shall set themselves round about against me, when a whole Army shall camp against me, my Heart would never fear, Psal. xvii.*

42. Let the Wicked be never so great and honourable, and never so highly advanc'd in the World, their Fame shall perish eternally. 'Tis to no Purpose that they rear up stately Trophies, and fill whole Volumes with the remarkable Passages of their Lives, making the Marbles to publish their Praises for whatsoever they do, and to render their Glory eternal; their Names shall be always abominable to God and all his holy Angels; and Mankind shall never remember it but with Curses and Detestation. These infamous Persons are like a stinking Damp, that gives Light for a Time, but when 'tis put out, it yields a most odious Stink. They may be also compared to certain Devils, that never go out of a Place, without leaving an ill Scent behind them.

43. 'Tis not so with good Men, their Fame shall flourish for ever; and like the Palm, the more Men press it down, the more it rises. Their Names are engraven in the highest Heaven, in the glorious Temple of Eternity, and it shall always be blessed by God and the Angels of his Glory. The Example of their Christian Virtues

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shall remain after them, for a Model to their Posterity to imitate. A faithful Christian, whose Soul is sanctified by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, is like the Alabaster-Box of Ointment, which when it was broken, and spilt upon our Saviour's Head, 'twas a precious Liquor that perfum'd all the Room. For such an one lives after his Death; when his Body is broken, and reduc'd to Ashes, his good Name spreads abroad, to the Glory of God, and the Edification of his Church. *Mary Magdalen's* Perfume fill'd only the Chamber where they were sitting, and was soon spent; but the sweet Perfume of an innocent and holy Life, fills both Heaven and Earth with a grateful Scent, and continues for ever and ever.

44. I judge that another powerful Means to withdraw us from Vice, and to induce us to Virtue, is to represent to our selves, at every Moment, the Excellency and Dignity of our Calling, to take a Delight in beholding with the spiritual Eyes the white Stone, where our new Name is written, which none knows but he who receives it. 'Tis the noble and high Quality of the Children of God, and of Believers, which he bestows upon none, but upon such whom he hath elected from all Eternity, for the eternal Enjoyment of Bliss in his glorious Kingdom. 'Tis reported of a certain young Prince, that when he had a Design to disgrace himself by lustful Actions and Debauchery, a wise Philosopher reclaim'd him from his wicked Purpose, by telling him, *Remember that thou art a King's Son*. Thus you Christian Souls, when Satan, the Flesh, and the World shall tempt you to filthy and unjust Actions, or to any other Sin, call to your Mind, that you are the Children of the King of Kings. Take heed you defile not such a precious Crown; and as our Saviour said to him who should have followed him, but was desirous first to go and bury his Father, *Suffer the Dead to bury the Dead*; likewise we say unto you, devout Souls, who have freely consecrated your selves unto God, to his Service and Worship, cast  
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away these vain and base Actions, and all these dead Works, leave them to such as are dead in their Trespases and Sins. But for you, behave your selves according to your celestial Calling, apply your selves to Righteousness and Holiness, and to the Practice of all other Virtues, as such who were dead, but now are risen to Life.

45. We must continually meditate upon the Holiness and Purity of our future Abode in Heaven, and the Expectation that we have there, *Rom. vi.* For as Jesus Christ is gone to prepare a Place for us, in the House of his heavenly Father, *John xiv.* 'tis but just and reasonable that we should fit and prepare our Souls for such holy and glorious Mansions, *Rev. xxi.* 'Tis not possible to go to Heaven by treading in the Paths of Hell. Nothing impure nor filthy shall enter into the holy City, the new *Jerusalem.* As in *Solomon's* Temple there was no way to the Holy of Holies, but through the Sanctuary: Thus if we will one Day enter into the heavenly Sanctuary, where Christ dwells, the true Ark of the Covenant, and the Mercy-Seat, *Eph. ii.* 'tis absolutely necessary, that we should tread in the Paths of good Works, which God hath prepar'd, that we should walk in them, *Tit. ii.* 'Tis upon this Consideration that *St. Paul* grounds the Exhortation to Piety and Christian Virtues, *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World, looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works; seeing that we have such Promises, let us cleanse our selves from all Filth of the Flesh and Spirit, finishing our Sanctification in the Fear of God,* *1 Cor. vii.* *St. John* makes use of the same Reason to persuade us to Holiness; *Beloved, we are now the Children of God, but what we shall be, doth not yet appear; now we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall*



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see him as he is, and whosoever bath this Hope in him, let him purify himself as he is pure, 1 John ii. The Apostle St. Peter employs the same Consideration to kindle in our Hearts this pure and celestial Fire; *We, according to his Promise, look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness; Wherefore beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in Peace, without Spot and blameless,* 2 Pet. iii.

46. You know, Christians, that God created our first Parents after his own Image and Likeness, before he brought them into his terrestrial Paradise. There is a great Reason, that this divine Image should be reprinted in our Souls, before we enter into the celestial Paradise. Unto this the Apostle hath a Regard when he tells the *Ephesians*, *Be ye renewed in the Spirit of your Mind, and put on the new Man, created according to God in Righteousness and Holiness,* Chap. iv.

47. If the Place of our future Abode, unto which we are designed, requires from us Sanctification, the Quality of the Persons, with whom we shall spend an Eternity, doth no less oblige to the same Behaviour; for they shall be Angels of Light, and the blessed Saints, who have wash'd and whiten'd their Robes in the Blood of the Lamb; *Rev. v.* 'Tis a glorious Church that hath neither Spot nor Wrinkle, nor any such thing, *Rev. v.* 'Tis the Spouse of the Son of God, cloathed in fine Linen, clean and white, which is the Righteousness of Saints, *Rev. xix.* St. Paul had this same Consideration, when he saith, *That we are fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God,* and, *that our Conversation ought to be as becometh Citizens of Heaven.* To wean us from the filthy Deeds of the Flesh, and from the prophane Disposition of *Esau*, he employs the same Reason to persuade us in *Heb. xii.* *You are come, saith he, to Mount Sion, to the City of the living God, the celestial Jerusalem, to the thousands of Angels, and to the Assembly and Church of the First-born, who are written in Heaven, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect.*

48. As a Child in his Mother's Womb begins to live there the same Life, that it leads when 'tis come into the World; so likewise a Christian ought to begin to live in the same Manner upon Earth as he hopes to live for ever in Heaven. If we will live and reign with Christ above in his Kingdom, we must at present have him live and reign in our Hearts here below by Faith.

49. The chief Happiness of Man consists not only in the true Knowledge of God, and of him whom he hath sent to save us, or in the spiritual Peace, or celestial Transports of the holy Spirit; but it consists in Holiness, without which none shall see God, *Job xvii. Rom. v.* Therefore the Apostle enquires of the Romans of his time, *What Fruit had you in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? but now being free from Sin, and become Servants of God, ye have your Fruit unto Holiness, and the end everlasting Life, Heb. xii. Rom. ix.*

50. I find also, that this is a very good Remedy to keep yourselves free from the Debaucheries and Corruptions of the Age; to abstain from the Company and Acquaintance of vicious Persons: for as he who touched things unclean, became thereby unclean; and as such as haunt amongst the sick of a Plague, are infected with their Disease; likewise 'tis the Property of evil Company to corrupt the best Manners, *2 Cor. xv.*

51. Whereas we should earnestly covet the Acquaintance of good Men, and delight in the Society of such, who like the Seraphims excite and inflame one another to glorify God, and sing forth his Praises; we must frequent such whom we desire to resemble. For as *Jacob's* Sheep brought forth Lambs, spotted and marked, as the Rod upon which they cast their Eyes; thus if we have our Eyes fixed upon the holy Examples of Piety and Virtue, we shall see ourselves insensibly transform'd into their Image and Resemblance. We ought to take Pleasure in their Company with whom we hope to live for ever in the highest Heavens.

52. The most powerful and most effectual Motive to oblige us to the Practice of Piety, of Holiness, and Purity of Life, is to look with the Eye of Faith upon him who is invisible, and to represent to our selves the great World as a large Temple where he dwells. Let the Voice that *Moses* heard out of the burning Bush, sound continually in our Ears, and in our Mind, *Put off the Shoes from thy Feet, for the place where thou standest is holy Ground*, *Exod. iii.* Cast off there thy base and earthly Affections, and renounce thy sottish and filthy Lusts; for thou art always before my Eyes, that are too clean and pure to suffer the Sight of Evil, and the place where thou standest is sanctify'd by my Presence, *Heb. i.* Remember that I see thine Heart, that I search thy Reins, and that I read thy most secret Thoughts, *Rev. ii.* Christian Souls, imagine that God calls unto you from Heaven continually, as he did unto *Abraham*, *Walk before me, and be perfect*, *Gen. xvii.* Let therefore the Dread of this divine Majesty seize upon thee, and possess thee. When *Potiphar's* Wife tempted chaste *Joseph* to defile himself with Adultery, she perceived nothing in the Room but this Object of her Lust; but this holy Man saw the glorious Godhead between him and this lascivious Woman. He perceiv'd God's Eye, that penetrates into the greatest Depths. This drew from him this Expression, *How can I do this Wickedness, and sin against God?* Thus if our Flesh tempt us, and if the Vicious and Prophane entice us into secret and shameful Retreats, to share in their filthy Crimes; let us then remember, that God is every where, and wheresoever we hide our selves, God hath an Ear to hear us, an Eye to see us, and an Hand to record all our Deeds, Words, and Thoughts. God is all Ear, all Eye, and all Hand. He discovers us as easily under the dark Shadows of the Night, as at break of Day. He spies us through our Fig-leaves, and beholds us under our most subtle Disguises. He understands our most inward Thoughts, and listens to the silent Language of our Hearts. He searcheth into all



the Closets of our Souls, and into the Foldings and Windings in our Consciences. In a Word, all Things are naked and open to the Eyes of him with whom we have to do. An ancient Philosopher persuaded such as desir'd to be virtuous, to chuse some grave and virtuous Person for their Example, to represent him always in their Presence, and to live as in his Sight. *Seneca*. We need not represent to ourselves imaginary Appearances; for in every Place where we are, and whatever we do or think, we are always in the Sight of the Holy of Holies, who is both our Witness and our Judge. It was *David's* Meditation when he cried out, *O Lord, whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I go from thy Presence? If I mount up to Heaven thou art there, if I go down into the Pit thou art there also; If I take the Wings of the Morning and fly to the uttermost part of the Sea, there shall thine Hand guide me, and thy Right Hand uphold me. If I say, the Darknes shall cover me, behold the Night shall be like Light round about me, Darknes shall not bide me from thee, and the Night shall shine as the Day, the Night and the Day are to thee alike.*

53. If the Devil and the World have ensnar'd us in their Nets, and if we have been unhappily lull'd asleep in the Bosom of some deceitful Pleasure: This Consideration alone, that God sees and understands us, is able to awake us with an holy Dread and Fear. Let therefore the Words of *St. Paul* sound continually in our Ears, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee; or, Awake to Righteousness and sin not*, Eph. v. 1 Cor. xv. Truly, if we be not stupify'd and besotted above Measure, this dreadful Voice that God thunders from Heaven, is able, not only to awake us from the Sleep of Iniquity, but also to oblige us to cry out with *Jacob*, *God is here, and I knew it not! O how dreadful is this Place! 'tis the House of God; 'tis the Gate of Heaven*, Gen. xxviii. As soon as *Peter* had taken notice of our Saviour's Look, that he cast upon him, he went out of the High Priest's Hall, and wept bitterly

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bitterly for his Apostacy. Thus, if we could but perceive and acknowledge, that God casts his Eyes continually upon us, we should repent of our Vices, and our Hearts would quickly melt in Tears of Contrition.

54. They, who have a powerful and malicious Enemy to watch over them, and to catch at something to accuse them before the Judge, that they may be condemned, are always upon their Guard, and nothing is able to induce them to utter a Word, or commit an Action that may give an Advantage. No Enemy is more powerful and malicious than Satan, who continually eyes us, that he may accuse us before God and draw us into Hell. For that Reason he is named, *Revel. xii. The Accuser of the Brethren, who accuseth them before God Day and Night.* 'Tis probable he registers all our idle Words and wicked Deeds to produce them before God's Throne when the Books shall be opened, and he shall render unto every one according to his Works. Take heed therefore, Christians, of the dreadful Accuser, of this mortal Enemy of your Salvation. Give him not cause to rejoyce at your Ruin, or to triumph at the Loss of your Souls. To this the Apostle exhorts us, *Eph. iv. Give no Place to the Devil.*

55. And because 'tis sometimes necessary to restrain ourselves with an holy Awe, and to withdraw ourselves out of Lust, as out of the Fire; you religious Souls, keep always in your Mind a short Account of the Judgments of God, that have been inflicted from time to time upon all manner of Sinners. Consider how God dealt with the heavenly Spirits, who did not keep their original Purity, they are reserved for utter Darkness, and for eternal Chains, until the great Day of Judgment; and say unto yourselves, if God hath not spared the Apostate Angels, will he spare Man that rebels against him, and offends him with Delight? Remember the dreadful Fall of our first Parents, who although they had been fashioned with God's own Hand, and instructed by him, have lost both them-

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selves and their Posterity, by listening to the deceitful Suggestions of the old Serpent. Cast your Thoughts upon the first wicked World which was destroyed by a Deluge, and upon the Cities of *Sodom*, *Gomorrab*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim*; upon whom fell the Fire and Brimstone of God's hot Displeasure. Look upon *Pharaoh*, and the *Egyptians* overwhelm'd with all their Pride, in the Waves of the *Red Sea*. Consider the three thousand that were killed with the *Levites* Swords because of the Idolatry of the Golden Calf; and the four and twenty thousand, whom a sudden Death swept away, because they went a whoring after *Baal-Peor*. Look with Fear upon the burning Serpents of the Wilderness, that cast their Poison upon the Murmurers against God, and their Superiors; upon the Earth that open'd its Mouth to swallow *Corab*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*; upon those heavenly Flames that consumed *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who offered strange Fire unto the Lord; upon the Bears that went out of the Forest to devour two and forty young Rascals who mock'd *Elisha*; upon the Lion that devour'd the Prophet who disobeyed God's Command, and hearkned to a lying Brother. In short, cast your Eyes with Astonishment upon *Nebuchadnezzar*, feeding among the Beasts of the Field, *Jezabel* eaten up by Dogs, *Herod* consumed with Worms, and the rich Miser burning in the Flames of Hell, *Dan. iv. 2 Kings ix. Acts xii. Luke xvi.*

56. Above all things, think upon the last Judgment; and consider this last Day, in which we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, to receive in our Bodies that which we shall have done, whether it be good or evil. Remember that in this dreadful Day God will bring to light the hidden things of Darkness, the secret Contrivances and Thoughts of the Heart. Before this Throne of Fire the Books shall be open'd; not only God's Books, where all our Sins and Impieties are registred, but also the Books of our Consciences, where the frightful Image of all our Crimes shall appear. In the Day of his glorious Coming, the Heavens shall



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shall melt, the Elements shall be dissolved, the Earth and all its Works shall be burnt with Fire, and every Man shall give an Account of every idle Word, how much more of every wicked Action, and prophane Discourse? *Mat. v. 12.*

57. That we may not be confounded, nor asham'd in this dismal Day, in which God will judge the World by the Man whom he hath ordained; let us be inwardly persuaded, that 'tis not sufficient to abstain from outward Sins, but we must also hate, and inwardly abhor them, *Acts xvii.* For as the Leopard in Chains leaves not his Skin nor his Spots, and changes not for all his Restraint his rapacious and cruel Nature, for he continues still a Leopard; and as a Thief in Fetters shut up in a Dungeon, remains a Thief in his Heart: Likewise such as abstain from exterior Sins only for fear of Man, and the Severity of the Laws, are nevertheless esteemed vicious and abominable in the Sight of God, and of his holy Angels; if every time that he thinks upon his Crimes, he is not moved with a true Contrition, and abhors them not with all his Heart. The best Means to render our Conscience whole is to tear it in Pieces with the Sorrows of Repentance.

58. 'Tis not sufficient to abstain from Thoughts, Words and Actions, that God prohibits, but we must also apply our selves to the Study of true Piety, of Virtue, and generally of all the good Works that God requires. For as the Praise and Honour of a good Bowman is never bestow'd upon one who hath only the Skill of not breaking his Bow, his Arrows and his Quiver; but to him who strikes the Mark, and aims well; and as he is not able to become a good Artist, who works not ill, because he doth nothing at all; but he who works well and shews excellent Pieces of Workmanship: Likewise he is not to pass for a good and religious Christian, who only abstains from Evil, and commits no outward Sins, but he that doth Good, and applies himself to Virtue. Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit,

Fruit, altho' it bears no evil Fruit, is hewn down and cast into the Fire, *Matth. ii.* Our Saviour curst the Fig-tree, not because it brought forth evil Fruit, but because it brought forth no good Fruit, but was altogether barren. The wicked Servant was cast out into utter Darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of Teeth; not because he had lost, or mispent his Talent, but because he had not imployed it well, and turn'd it to his Lord's Advantage, *Mat. xxv.* Not only such shall be condemned to the Flames, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, who afflict God's Children on Earth, and spill the Blood of his Servants; but such as have not cloath'd his Members, visited and comforted them, nor given them to eat and drink. In short, if you enquire from the rich Miser, how he comes to be condemn'd to Hell, or tortur'd in the Flames, he will not tell you it was because he took what was not his own, or because he committed Murders, Violences, and other horrid Deeds, but because he lived without Charity, and had not Pity on the Poor.

59. And as God requires that we should proceed daily forward, until we come to the Measure of the perfect Stature, in our Lord Jesus Christ, we must very frequently take a View of our former Life, and feel the Pulse of our Lusts, to see whether they be not more fervent and violent than before, whether the old Man continues to decline, and how much we have gain'd upon our wicked Affections, and reformed our corrupt Dispositions. For as those that swim against the Stream, if they slack but a little, are carried downwards by the Violence of the Current: Likewise if we employ not all our Strength to swim up to our heavenly Source, Integrity, and Perfection, the Torrent of our Lusts, and of evil Customs, will force us down into the deep Abyss of Death, and eternal Destruction. We must therefore examine every Day, what Progress we have made in Piety and Holiness; and whether since so many Years, that God speaks to us, and instructs us to discover what is pleasing to him,

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if we have more Piety, Zeal, and Charity, and more Holiness than before. We must imitate the solicitous Care of such as have transplanted some rare Plant of the *East* into this *Northern* Climate; they have always their Eye upon it, to take notice of every thing that happens to it. We must propose for our Example a Steward having a great Account to make up, who looks often upon his Memorials and Registers. An Heathen Philosopher was highly prais'd, because he never laid himself down to sleep, until he had well examined what Progress he had made in Philosophy and moral Virtue: Likewise a good Christian should never cast himself upon his Bed to sleep a Night, until he hath seriously considered how he hath proceeded forward in Piety and the Love of God. In a Word, a true Christian by this means shall never be less alone, than when he is alone. For then he shall entertain himself with his God, and shall discover unto him his Heart and his most secret Thoughts. Then he shall speak seriously unto his Soul, and shall examine exactly his Conscience. Then he will look to his wicked Deeds, to weep and lament for them with Tears of sincere Repentance. Then he will cast himself upon the infinite Mercy and Goodness of God, to embrace it with a lively Faith and Assurance. Then he will make a Reflection upon God's Commands, to walk in them with an holy Zeal and Earnestness all the Days of his Life.

60. Amongst these Directions that I intend to give to him that desires to apply himself to the Practice of Piety, and to abandon Vice, I must not forget this Advice, that he must never satisfy his carnal Lusts and Pleasures, but he should rather check and bridle 'em. For when we grant them what they crave, we are so far from extinguishing the feverish Flames, and satisfying these hellish Longings, that we do but increase and encourage them the more. As he that loves Money is not satisfied with Money, and as the Ambitious is never exalted high enough in Honour; thus the lustful Worldling is never contented with the fullest Enjoyment



ment of carnal Pleasures. 'Tis a Fire that kindles another, and a Flame that never saith, *'Tis enough*. These filthy Lusts are like the Serpent that stings the Bosom of the Person that warms it in his Breast; or as the Furnace of *Babylon*, that burnt up those who first kindled it. So such as entertain the Flames of their fleshly Lusts, keep in their Bosoms a Fire that will at last burn and totally consume them.

61. We must resist the first Motions of the Flesh with the Shield of Faith, extinguish the first enflam'd Darts of the Devil. For 'tis very easy to put out the first Sparkle of an encreasing Fire; but if we neglect or cherish it, it may come to be a fearful Burning: And as we can without Pain pluck up with one Hand a young Tree planted but a few Days; but if we suffer it to take Root, and to get Strength, we shall not be able to pull it up with both Hands, but must be forced to employ the Axe, the Wedge, and the Saw: Likewise if we resist Sin in its beginning, we shall easily overcome and tame it; we shall extinguish without Difficulty these first Beginnings of a strange Fire, and we shall pluck up with ease this bitter Plant, that will grow up to our Sorrow. But if we suffer this infernal Fire of Lust to encrease, all the Water of the Sea will not be able to extinguish it. And if we give leave to this cursed Plant to grow, it will never be plucked up without much Sweat and Labour. Sin never begins as it ends, and discovers not all its Poison at once. As the Child in its Mother's Womb is not made in an instant; thus this Monster of Satan is form'd by Degrees, one Chain of Hell is link'd into another. When Lust hath conceiv'd, it brings forth Sin. From the Thoughts proceeds the Suggestion, and from the Suggestion Pleasure and Delight, and from Delight Consent, and after Consent, follows the Deed, which begets the Habit. From thence the Sinner proceeds to be hardned in a Custom of Sin. Thus the Devil aggravates his tyrannical Yoke, and strengthens the Chains, by which he drags us into eternal Damnation.

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62. As among the Planets, there is always one that ruleth and causeth his Influences to be felt upon Earth more than the rest; thus among Sins and Lusts, there is always some one or other that sways in us, unto which we are more addicted than to the rest; this therefore we must chiefly take heed of. Here we ought to discover our Strength and Industry, for fear that the Devil should employ it as a Means to enter into our Souls, and establish there his Tyranny. We must imitate the wise, valiant Captains, who having a Place to defend against a vigilant and an active Enemy, fortify the Places that are naturally the weakest, and furnish them with the best Soldiers, causing there a watchful and continual Guard to be kept. Christian Souls, be sure you take all the Armour of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil Day, and having overcome all, that you may continue stedfast, *Eph. vi.*

63. We ought not to neglect any Sin, nor imagine that there are some light and inconsiderable ones, that God regards not. For a little leaven seasons and leavens the whole Lump, and the least dead Fly corrupts and causeth several Confections to bubble up and spoil. The least Scratch may cause a feverish Inflammation, and but a little Poison can lay us in our Graves. The Devil cares not by what Gates he enters into our Souls, and by what Tie he takes hold of our Hearts. Thus the cursed Serpent slides thro' the least and narrowest Crannies and Holes of the House, as well as thro' the widest Gates. Christian Souls, give no place to the Devil, but shut your Ears to all his Inchantments.

64. We must not only always eschew all manner of Sins, and abstain from all Appearance of Evil; but for our better Security, that we may not endanger our Salvation, we must take heed of all those things whereof our Souls are doubtful, and about which our Consciences cannot be satisfied. We must never do any thing, but we ought first to be fully persuaded that 'tis acceptable to God, and agreeable with his holy Will; for *whatsoever is done without Faith, is Sin.*

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65. As they who intend to stop the Current of a running Water, are wont to cut for it a new Channel; so if your vicious Lusts and Passions are too violent, you must divert them, and propose to your selves new and fresh Objects. Are you cholerick? Be angry and sin not; fret and fume against your own Sins and Lusts, and crush in pieces these Children of *Babel*. Are you oppress'd with Sadness and Grief? Let the Causes of your Sadness be your Offences against God, and the Scandals of his Church. Are you furious and violent? Remember to be of the Number of those Persons, who take the Kingdom of God by Violence. Are you inclined to Covetousness? Covet and be greedy of the Riches and Treasures of Heaven, *Mat. x.* Are you lifted up with ambitious Thoughts? Let your Ambition's Aim be to raise you upon the immortal Throne, and to attain to the incorruptible Crown of Glory. Are you lustful, and given to your Pleasures? Labour to enjoy the divine and ravishing Delights of the holy Spirit, and meditate often upon the eternal Pleasures that are reserved for you in Heaven.

66. Devout Souls, who sigh and groan for your infirmities, who labour to attain to Perfection, apply your selves to read and meditate upon God's holy Word, with a religious Attention; and before you enter into this holy Lecture, say with the Prophet *David*, *Lord, open mine Eyes, and I shall see the Wonders of thy Law*, *Psal. cxix.* Intreat your good God to open your Hearts, as he did *Lydia's*, to receive this incorruptible Seed of your Regeneration, and that he may give you a filial Obedience, *Acts xvi.* In such a Case, as soon as you shall hear the Lord's Voice, you will find your Soul enflamed with his holy Love, *1 Pet. i.* When we only behold a beautiful Countenance, we become not more beautiful thereby; nor do we take from it its excellent Features, *2 Cor. iii.* but 'tis otherwise with us, who behold as in a Glass openly, the Glory of the Lord;



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Lord, we are transformed thereby into the same Image of his Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

67. Take Pleasure to meditate often upon God's wonderful Works, and to sing forth his Praises. The spiritual Songs inspir'd by the Holy Ghost, commonly appease all the evil Motions of our Mind, and beget in us an holy Joy, and celestial Peace. As when *Saul* was tormented with a wicked Spirit, *David* was appointed with his Harp to play before him, and by that means quieted his troubled Mind; likewise when *Hatred*, *Anger*, *Revenge*, *Covetousness*, *Ambition*, or *Lust*, or any other of the unruly Passions, which are as so many evil Spirits, disturb and torture our Souls within us, we must seek a Remedy from *David's* Harp, and sing unto the Lord in spiritual Songs and Hymns.

68. We ought carefully to attend at the publick Exercises of Devotion, and not leave off the assembling of our selves together, as the Manner of some is. For where there are but two or three met together, in the Name of Jesus Christ, he is there in the midst of them. *St. Thomas*, who was not with the Apostles when Christ first appeared among them, lost the Comfort then of seeing him risen from the Dead. And if this merciful Redeemer had not had Compassion on him, he had perished in his Unbelief for ever. If upon the Day of Pentecost, any of the Faithful had been found absent from the holy Company of the Faithful in *Jerusalem*, they had not seen the glorious Appearance of the Holy Ghost. Who knows but in a Sermon that we have neglected, we have lost some pious Advice, some seasonable Exhortation, by which God might have brought our Hearts to Repentance? Who knows, but instead of the Fire that devours us, we might have felt the holy Flames kindled in us, like unto those Flames of the burning Bush, that would burn in us, and not consume us? Who knows but at the breaking up of the Assembly, we might have said as the two Disciples of Christ going to *Emmaus*, *Did not our Hearts burn within us when he spake to us, and opened the Scriptures?*

69. We must be fervent, zealous, and persevering in Prayers and other holy Duties, and embrace our Lord and Saviour with the Arms of Faith and Repentance, and say unto him as *Jacob*, *I shall not leave thee, until thou hast blessed me.* Chiefly, we ought to apply our selves to these holy Exercises, when we feel the inward and troublesome Strugglings of the Flesh against the Spirit. We should imitate the virtuous Woman, who feeling two Children stirring in her Womb, fell to her Prayers, and unburden'd her Sorrows in the Bosom of our heavenly Father. And as *St. Peter*, when he began to sink, lifted up his Hands and Voice, *Lord, save me,* *Mat. xiv.* likewise we, who walk upon this dangerous Sea of the World, as soon as we feel our selves sinking into carnal Delights, or as soon as the Waves of vicious Examples, and dangerous Customs overpower us; let us cry out from the bottom of our Hearts, O merciful God, stretch out thine Hand from above, and deliver me from these Waters of Hell that carry me away; accomplish thy Virtue in mine Infirmities, and give me Grace in resisting against Sin, to resist unto Blood, *Psal. lxxix.* *Heb. v.* Let thine holy Spirit overcome mine; let Heaven command the Earth, and let Paradise lead Hell in Triumph. If we make this Petition with all our Hearts, God will grant it from his holy Sanctuary. He will extinguish the Fire that burns us. He will shut the Lion's Mouth that is ready to devour us. He will appease the Winds and Storms that the Devils have raised in us, and at his first Entrance into our Ship, tost up and down with Fears and Apprehensions, he will bring Peace and a blessed Tranquility, and will lead us to the safe Haven of eternal Happiness. As *Moses*, when he had been familiar with God, came down from the Mountain with a shining Countenance; and as our Saviour, when he was in Prayer upon Mount *Tabor*, was transfigured, his Garments were white as the Light, and his Face appear'd as glorious as the Sun; likewise if we lift up our selves above all

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these earthly and corruptible Things, and pray to God with an holy Earnestness and Zeal, we shall see that our Souls shall be thereby cloathed with Holiness, and full of Glory and Light. They will be transformed into the blessed Image of the great God, whom we adore; for as soon as we behold him we shall become enlightned.

70. To the End we may tame this Body, and that we may reduce it to Obedience, and overcome all our wicked and dangerous Lusts, *Psal. lxi. 34.* 'tis necessary that we should add Fasting to our Prayers. We must not always expect a Time appointed by the Rulers of our Church upon solemn Occasions, but we must prescribe to our selves a Fast, according as we shall see it expedient and useful. For if this Flesh be unruly and rebellious against God and his holy Laws; if Ease and Plenty encourage its Impurities and Insolence, let us deprive it of its Food and Dainties; labour to mortify it by Fastings and Abstinence, and remember what our Saviour Christ saith in the Gospel, *That there are some evil Spirits that are not to be driven out, but by Fasting and Prayer, Mat. xxvii.*

71. If God gives us Grace to overcome Sin, and mortify our Lusts, by fervent and earnest Prayers, by austere Fastings, by the bitter Tears of Repentance, and by the Assistance and Blessing of his divine Spirit upon our Devotions; take heed that we become not careless and negligent in good Works. Deceive not your selves, religious Souls, and be not surprized; for many times the old Man looks as if he were dead, that we might not offer to strike him again to the Heart, that he may recover more Strength. There is always in the Ashes something of that infernal Fire that is able to do much Mischief. Lust is not rooted out so entirely, but that there remain some Strings in our Hearts that may grow again. This Source of Iniquity is not so dry, but that it may run afresh. And during the time of Peace, Men prepare new Armour for the War, and exercise themselves at Tilts and Turnaments



ments; likewise during the Calm and Rest of our Souls, we must prepare some Armour for our spiritual Warfare. And as 'tis not sufficient to win a Place by Assault, and to drive out the Enemy's Forces, but we must also watch Day and Night, and keep a constant and a strong Guard, that we may not be surprized and overcome; thus when we have forced out the Devil, and banished him out of our Hearts, we must be always upon our Guard, and stop all the Avenues, for fear that this evil Spirit should come upon us, accompanied with seven worse Spirits, and that our last Condition should be worse than the first.

72. To these Works of Piety and Devotion, in which we cannot be always employed, we must remember to add a lawful Calling; for Idleness is the Mother of all Vices. When we are doing nothing, the Devil prompts us to Evil. This befel *David*, a Man after God's own Heart, when he gave himself over, contrary to his former Practice, to base Idleness; whilst he was looking into his Neighbour's House, the Devil entered into his Heart, and with the Assistance of a filthy Object, enflamed his Soul with an unlawful Lust. As the Iron that is not used, becomes rusty, as the standing Water putrifies, and as the Earth that is not manur'd, begets Insects and venomous Serpents; likewise a Soul that is not employ'd, is soon covered over with the Rust of Vice. 'Tis easily dragg'd along into the Corruption of the Age, and apt to beget and bring forth Monsters. Therefore the Prophet *Ezekiel* examines the very beginning and first Spring of *Sodom's* Sin, saying, *That it was the Plenty of Bread, Ease, and Idleness*, Ezek. xvi. Christians, if you desire to keep your Souls pure and undefiled, that the holy Spirit may reign in them, give no Entertainment to the Devil: Let him find you always well employed, and let him never see you at Leisure, to assault you with his hellish Temptations, *Eph. iv.*

73. After all, we must seriously think upon Death, and represent it always before our Eyes. For as a

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Pilot to govern and steer a Ship, ought to be at the Stern, and sit at the Helm; so to govern the Course of this Life as we ought, we must consider our latter End, live always as if we were ready to die, and to breathe forth the last Gasps; therefore this Sentence is worthy to be engraven upon Cedar in Golden Characters, *Whatever thou sayest, and whatever thou doest, remember thy latter End, and thou shalt never sin*, Eccl. vii.

Wonder not, Christian Souls, if in this Treatise, where I am to furnish you with Remedies against the Fears of Death, I would have Death itself to be a Remedy against Sin, for these things are united and linked together, or rather they hold one another by the Hand. For as a good and holy Life is a safe Preparation to an happy Death; likewise Death is a strong Motive to oblige you to live well. For there is none, unless it be a brutish and desperate Varlet, but at the Hour of Death laments at the Consideration of his former wicked Life, and grieves that he hath not apply'd himself to the Fear of God, and to the Practice of Christian Virtues. If a Malefactor, after he is condemn'd to die, and hath heard the Sentence of his Doom, did mind nothing but drinking and playing, instead of Prayer and Repentance, by which such an one is to dispose himself to go to God, every one would wonder at him, as at a Monster and a Madman: Likewise if we consider as we ought, that Death is certain and unavoidable, that God hath pronounced the Sentence in his Anger, and that none shall be excepted; this will be able to recall us from Vice, and to persuade us to Holiness, without which none shall see God, *Heb. xii.* Therefore at every Moment, when Satan, the World, and our own Flesh, intice us to any evil Action, let us think within our selves, would I have Death find and seize upon me in this Employment. Am I in a good Disposition to go thus unto God and to appear before his Tribunal? *Jesus* the Son of *Syrach* had well consider'd this when he pronounc'd this excellent Sentence, which I could wish were engraven

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in the Soul of every Christian, *Remember thy latter End, and thou shalt not sin.*

We must therefore live in the World without being guilty of its Corruptions and Abominations. As Fish preserves its Sweetness in the midst of the salt Waves of the Sea, and as Sheep never learn to bark nor bite, tho' Dogs be always with them; likewise tho' our Conversation be in the World, amongst the prophane and vicious Men of this Age, we must not imitate their filthy Words, their Oaths, nor their Blasphemies; and less Reason have we to follow their wicked and abominable Deeds; we must converse among them as *Lot* in the City of *Sodom*, as *Joseph* in *Egypt*, as *Daniel* in *Babylon*. Blessed and holy is he who hath part in the first Resurrection, the second Death shall have no Power upon him.

When *Jacob* by God's Command went to *Bethel*, he charg'd his Wives, his Children, and all that were with him, *Put away the strange Gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your Garments, and let us arise, and go up to Bethel, Gen. xxxiii. And I will make there an Altar unto God, who answered me in the Day of my Distress, and was with me in the Way which I went.* Then they deliver'd into *Jacob's* Hands all the strange Gods that were in their Possession, and hid them under an Oak in *Shechem*. Thus before you go to the true *Bethel*, to the Dwelling where you shall eat your Fill of the Bread of the Kingdom of Heaven, before you offer unto God the Sacrifice of your Souls, you must, if you be true Christians, renounce Sin, and all wicked Lusts, which have been formerly your Idols. I would advise you to bury them deep in this base Earth. But you had better do as God commands you from Heaven, *Trample under Foot all these abominable Vices, and all these worldly Lusts, that are to you as so many false Gods that you worship, Ezek. ii. Put away from before me those Idols of Jealousy that provoke me to Jealousy, and sanctify the Temple of my Holiness.* Cleanse your Hands, ye Sinners, and sanctify your selves, ye double minded. Put off the



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old Man with all his Deeds, and put on the new Man created according to the Image of God, in Righteousness and true Holiness, and then you shall be admitted to the holy Temple of my Glory, to offer unto me amongst the innumerable Companies of Saints, the acceptable Perfumes of Praises and Thanksgivings, *Jam. iv. Eph. iv.*

This is a Duty so just and necessary, that natural Reason itself, not enlightened by Grace, acknowledges it to be so; nay, the most wretched Varlets are constrain'd to give Glory to God, and to condemn themselves; they confess that they are indebted to the divine Majesty, but the Payment of this Debt they put off from Day to Day; and whenever you come to them, they are ready to require a Delay; they acknowledge their Faults, the Heinousness of their Crimes, and the Necessity of Repentance; but they are always putting off Repentance and Reformation of Life. As when a Sluggard is newly awaked out of his Sleep, he desires *yet a little Sleep, a little Slumber, a little folding of the Hands to sleep*, Prov. xxiv. thus whenever Death appears, the Voluptuous are yet requesting to enjoy their carnal Delights. When the Lord's Messengers are calling upon us to repair the Breaches that the Devil hath made in our Souls, we could willingly answer as the *Jews* did to the Prophet, that *the Time is not come that the Lord's House shall be built*, Hag. i. The young Man in his Youth and Strength is apt to say, that 'tis not yet time to busie himself about Wisdom and Reformation, and that when he comes to be old, he will then repent of the Sins of his Youth. And the old Man endeavours to put off his Repentance until the Hour of his Departure. He expects then to make a general Confession of all his Crimes, to satisfy all his Neighbours, and to restore what he possesseth unjustly. In short, all Men generally flatter themselves in their evil Courses, and most are so extravagant, as to be persuaded, that when they have lived in Sin and Iniquity all their Life, mispent God's Blessings, abused

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his Mercies, a Tear, or a Sigh at the Time of our Death will make a sufficient Amends for all; and that he will be fully satisfy'd, if we say then as the prodigal Child, *My Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and against thee*: Or as the good Thief, *Lord, remember me*, Luke xxiii. 42.

I have much to say against so great a Mistake, so dangerous and prophane a Persuasion. First, what Reason have we to believe that God will accept our Repentance, when we cannot endure to accept of his Graces and Redemption; that he will hear our Sighs, and grant our Prayers, when we will by no means give ear to his Voice, nor obey the Commands that he sends us of repenting?

Wretched Man! dost thou stay to glorify God till the Moment when thy Breath shall fail thee? Is it just that thou shouldest then begin to serve him, when thou shalt be able to serve and please thy Flesh no longer, nor satisfy thy foolish Lusts?

This great God who had commanded, during the Shadows and Types of *Moses's* Law, that the Children of *Israel* should offer unto him their First-born, and the First-fruits of their Inheritances, will he take it well now in this admirable Sun-shine of the Gospel, that thou shouldest offer to the Devil, and to the World, the First-fruits of thy Youth, the Strength of thy Years, and that thou should'st reserve for him only the Dregs and Corruption of a decaying old Age?

'Tis to mock God and Man to dream of living well when our Life is far spent and gone. To lift up our Eyes and Thoughts to Heaven when the Earth fails us under our Feet. To restore other Mens Goods, when we can keep them no longer. To renounce all Desires of Revenge, when we have no Power of Acting. To abstain from the foul Lusts of the Flesh, when we are able to continue in them no longer. To abhor Theft, Usury, Rapine, and Extortion, when a Coffin is a preparing to receive us, and Death looks us in the Face. Such Persons cannot be said to leave Sin, but rather Sin leaves

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leaves them ; as the Ravens leave the Tree that falls down with Age, or that is struck with the Thunder.

By our unreasonable Delays, Evil and Sin grow older, and the Cure becomes every Day more difficult. For the more thou shalt be hardned in thy Corruption, and confirmed in thy Sins, the harder it will be for thee to break and melt thy corrupted Heart. The deeper Lust shall have cast its Roots in thy Soul, the more Labour thou shalt find in plucking them out. In short, he that gives too much Liberty to his unlawful Affections, makes his Vices, by Custom, become natural, and cannot be converted without a great Miracle.

Man's most important and difficult Affair in the World, is his Conversion to God. Therefore 'tis a great Folly to put it off to such a time, as we shall be in the feeblest and weakest Condition ; to a time when we shall have most Business to do, and most Trouble. Doubtless he orders not his Affairs well, who puts off his praying to God, and his Thoughts of Heaven, until he comes to be stretched on his Death-bed ; for then we know not to whom we are first to answer. An Account of our worldly Concerns is then required from us ; we are then to make our last Will and Testament, we call for a Scrivener, and are inwardly vex'd to behold him ; the Visits of Friends trouble us, and their Absence doth much displease us : Pain seizes upon us ; Defluxions are ready to choak us ; Fevers burn us and disturb our Minds ; Physicians oppress us with noisome Remedies ; the Noise is a Trouble to us, and Silence is suspected ; our Parents and Friends torment us with their officious Dealings ; our Children, and our greatest Darlings melt our Hearts, and their Tears force us to weep. But the worst is, the Devils are then most busy and active. These hellish Fiends, like devouring Ravens, fly about us, endeavouring to fright us. In short, 'tis then the Prince of the Powers of the Air stirs up against us furious Storms and Tempests, to cause us to perish in the very Haven.



Haven. In the midst of so many Disturbances, and of so many powerful Waves, 'tis a difficult Task to possess our Souls in Peace, to think upon our Consciences, to hear God speaking to us to prepare for Death as we ought, and to keep our selves from sinking, and from being swallowed up with its Apprehensions and Frights.

Old Age hath Infirmities enough, we need not defile it with youthful Sins and Lusts. For many times it caueth more Wounds in our Souls, than there are Wrinkles upon our Skin. When the Body decays and grows weak, the Lusts of the Flesh become stronger, and oft-times when it whitens the Face, it spots the Conscience. In a word, the Bones of old Age are weak enough and sufficiently full of Pain, that we need not over-burden them with the Sins committed in the Flower and Strength of our Age.

Moreover, we know not when, nor how Death will assault us, nor what Avour we are to expect from it. Who knows but that it intends not to give us the Liberty of speaking to our Friends, nor of thinking upon our Souls? For it sends not always a Warning to us, as to the good King *Hezekiah*, *Set thy House in Order, for thou shalt die*, 2 Kings xx. For as we have already taken notice, it surpriseth us in every Age, in every Time and Place, and in the midst of all manner of Employments. Old *Eli* fell down backward and brake his Neck, when he heard the unhappy News of the taking of the Ark, and the Death of his Sons. *Job's* Children dreamed of nothing but of solacing and delighting themselves in their Feasts and Jollity, when the House where they were fell down and buried them in its Ruins. But besides these unhappy Accidents, how many are there whose Mouth Death closeth on a sudden, without suffering them to speak a Word? How many are there in the World, who are thought to be in perfect Health, and yet suddenly fall into an Apoplexy and into other quick Diseases, so that they are to be found sooner dead than thought to be sick?

Besides,

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Besides, tho' we should have a greater Strength and Vigour, so that we might foresee the time of our Departing drawing near, Repentance is not at our Command, 'tis given us from above, and a special Favour of the holy Spirit. God works not Miracles every Day, he changeth not at every Moment Rocks into Springs of Water, nor Stones into Rivers of Oil; he grants not the Favour to all Sinners hardned in their Lusts, and confirmed in their Apostacy from him, to be converted and to be washed with the Tears of Repentance.

If thou seest a Thief repenting at the time of his Suffering, 'tis a particular Example that abolishes not the general Rule. By this Man God intends to comfort Sinners, who truly repent at the end of their Days, and to assure them that the Arms of his Mercy are always open to receive them into his Favour. I confess that true Repentance can never be too late, but I affirm that it can never be too soon. 'Tis most certain, that at any time the Sinner repents, God will shew him Mercy, but that Moment is not in our Power. For one Sinner that repents at the Hour of Death, there are Thousands that depart in Impenitency. And to set no other Example, but that which Mount *Calvary* offers to us, if thou seest on one Side of Christ a Thief converted, and believing, look on the other Side, and thou shalt perceive a Wretch, who having spent his Days in Wickedness and Impiety, expires in his Sins, belching forth grievous Blasphemies and Reproaches against the King of Glory. So that if one of these remarkable Passages flatters thee, and lulls thy Conscience asleep, the other should move and awaken thee with an holy Fear. Moreover the Thief was converted at the first Moment, when Christ called and invited him. Therefore, now that you hear the Voice of God calling, harden not your Hearts as in the Day of Provocation, for fear that God should swear in his Anger, that you shall never enter into his Rest. Now, at this very Instant that you read this, turn unto  
God

God with all your Heart, and he will have Pity and Compassion upon you.

When the Opportunity is once lost, 'tis not easily, and at all times recovered. Therefore Painters have represented Occasion with a great Tuft of Hair on the Forehead, but all bald behind; but unto every thing there is a Season. God hath vouchsafed unto us a Time, and reserved another for himself. Our Time is when we are invited to Repentance; but God's Time is when he manifests and declares his Justice and Judgments. During the Space of one hundred and twenty Years, *Noah*, an Herald of Righteousness, preach'd Repentance to the old World, this was their time; but when God's abused Patience was justly provoked, it turn'd into Fury; then he sent a fearful Deluge that cover'd all the Face of the Earth; this was God's Time, and the Day of his just Vengeance. When *Lot* spake to his Sons-in-Law to persuade them to go out of *Sodom*; this was the time of their Salvation and Deliverance; but when Fire and Brimstone overwhelm'd and burned them alive, their Cries and gnashing of Teeth were as useless as their Laughter and Mocking had been formerly unjust. When *Esau* sold the Privileges of his Birth-right, it was the time of thinking seriously upon the true and heavenly Blessing; but when he had sold it for a Sup of Pottage, all his Tears and Weepings were as fruitless as his Gluttony had been insatiable, and his Temper prophane. When the Bridegroom in the *Canticles*, was at the Door with the Dew of his heavenly Joys, and the Myrrh of his eternal Comforts; it was the Bride's time, and the Occasion that was offer'd to her to enjoy the heavenly Delights; but when she had delayed a while, unwilling to rise from her Bed, and put on her Coat, he was gone, and it was to no purpose that she sought him about the City. For instead of melting with the Embraces of her Beloved, she finds her Enemies that beat and wounded her. When the poor *Lazarus* begg'd his Bread at the rich Man's Gate, it was the time when this unmerciful Man should have



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have repeated and shewed Mercy to the Poor ; but when in Hell burning in the Flames, 'twas in vain that he lifted up his Eyes to Heaven to seek for some Comfort. When our Saviour exhorted the *Jews* to believe in him, when he wept so bitterly upon *Jerusalem*, that had killed the Prophets ; it was the Time and Opportunity of this unhappy Nation, it was the Time of their Salvation, and of God's Blessings ; but when they had obstinately rejected this great God and Saviour, and desired that his Blood might be upon them and their Children, God cast them away from him, and they are become a Scorn and a Reproach amongst all the Nations of the Earth. Finally, as it is to no purpose that a Malefactor resolves to amend his Life when the Judge is at the Door, and when the Serjeants have caught him by the Throat, or when he is upon the Gallows ready to be strangled and executed ; likewise 'tis too late to begin to think upon God when Death seizes upon us, and Hell opens its Jaws to swallow us. Miserable Wretch ! why despitest thou the Riches of God's Goodness and Patience, and of his Long-Suffering, not considering that the Goodness of God invites thee to Repentance ; but by the Hardness of thine Heart that is without Repentance, thou treasurest up unto thy self Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, who shall render to every Man according to his Works ? *Rom. ii.*

Certainly our Salvation is a Matter too important to be neglected, our Life too uncertain to delay it 'till the next Day, and our Soul too precious to run the Hazard of losing it. If we had many, we might venture the Loss of one ; but seeing that we have but one only, and that if it be lost, all the Riches and Treasures of the World cannot redeem it, we should watch Night and Day to preserve it. We should be moved with an holy Fear of so great a Loss, and decline whatsoever might cast this our precious Soul into the second Death, and eternal Damnation.

'Tis

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'Tis our Lord and Saviour's Exhortation, *Watch*, saith he, *for you know not the Hour when the Lord is to come. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation; for the Spirit is willing but the Flesh is weak*, Mat. xiv. Mark x. Luke xxii. This Advice was so necessary, that he doth often repeat it. *Take heed to your selves, watch and pray, for you know not when the time shall be. Take heed to your selves lest your Hearts be over-charged with Gluttony and Drunkenness, and the Cares of this Life, and that Day surprize you unawares; for as a Thief it shall come on all them that dwell on the Face of the whole Earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man*, Mat. xiii. Luke xxi.

To awaken us to move from our spiritual Drowsiness, and prophane Sleep, our Saviour brings the Example of the wicked Servant, who said in his Heart, *My Lord delayeth his coming*, Mat. xxiv. And therefore he began to beat his Fellow-Servants, to eat, drink, and be drunk; our Saviour adds, that the Lord of that Servant shall come in a Day when he looketh not for him, and in an Hour when he is not expected, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his Portion with the Hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth, Mat. xxiv. The Parable of the foolish Virgins had the same Drift, they being fallen asleep without any Oil in their Lamps, were so surprized at the Bridegroom's coming, that they could not be admitted into the Marriage-Chamber; 'twas in vain that they beat at the Gate with a *Lord, Lord, open unto us*, Mat. xxv. The Door could not be opened to them, but it was answered from within, *Verily I say unto you, I know you not*.

'Tis certain the chief and principal Purpose of this and other Parables, is to teach us how we should be prepared to expect the glorious Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but they may very well be applied to Death; for it hath pleased God to keep secret and hidden the Day in which he will call us to himself, and

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and that of our Saviour's coming to Judgment, that we may be equally prepared, and disposed for the one as well as for the other. As we shall be found at the time of our Death, so shall we be judged at the great Day, when Christ shall come down from Heaven with the Angels of his Power, and from that Judgment there shall be no Appeal. Let us therefore put off the Sin that doth so easily beset us, and break all the Chains of our filthy Lusts. Let us disarm Death, and take from it its venomous Darts, and its piercing Stings. Let us pluck off the Claws, and the Teeth of this furious Beast, and extinguish all its Fires, and it shall never be able to terrify us. Let us live the Life of Saints, and God will give us Grace to die the Death of the Righteous, and to end like them. Let us live as we would at the Instant when Death is upon our Lips. Let us live as if at every Moment we were to die, and as if God were calling to us, *Come and appear to Judgment.*

And when Satan, the World, and our own Flesh, solicit and draw us to Evil, let us say within ourselves, is it thus that thou wilt reward the Lord thy God, and acknowledge all the Blessings and Favours that thou hast received from his bountiful Hands? O Fool, dost thou conceive that thou canst go to Heaven by marching the Road to Hell? If thou dost wilfully cast thy self away into the Depths of Sin, what Assurance hast thou of rising again by Repentance? If thou forsakest God, art thou not afraid God will forsake thee? Is it thus that thou preparest thy self to die? Are these Lusts the Arms with which thou must encounter Death? Art thou ready to draw near to the sacred Majesty of thy God, and to appear before his great Tribunal. The Night is far spent, the Day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the Works of Darknefs, and let us put on the Armour of Light, *Rom. x.* Let us live as Children of God, and Heirs of his Kingdom, *Phil. iii.* Let us be blameless, and shine as Lights in the World. Let our Conversation be as Citizens in Heaven,

from



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from whence we expect the Lord Jesus, *Eph. ii.* Let us go to the heavenly and holy *Jerusalem*, by the way of good Works, which God hath prepared, that we might walk in them, *Zech. xiii.* In all our Actions, Words and Thoughts, let there be engraven *Holiness to the Lord.* Let us discover by our Deeds, that we really believe, without doubting, whatsoever the holy Scripture declares of the eternal Pains of Hell, and of the unspeakable Joys of Heaven, *Gal. vi.* Whilst we have Time, let us do good to all, but chiefly to the Household of Faith, *Eph. v.* Let us redeem the time, for the Days are evil. Follow not *Adam's* Example, who to eat of the Fruit so pleasing to his Taste, lost the Paradise which God had given him. Let us not lose the eternal Delights that God hath prepared for us from the beginning of the World, for a Moment of carnal Pleasure.

Let us imitate the holy and wise Virgins, put Oil in our Lamps betimes; let us enrich our Hearts with Faith, Hope and Charity, and put on the Robes of Righteousness and Holiness. As God's faithful Servants, let us labour to accomplish our Task. Let us be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, that when Death shall appear, or rather when the Prince of Life shall call us to himself, we may be ready to give him an exact Account of our Talents, with which he hath entrusted us, that we may say unto him in Sincerity and Truth, *I have done the Work that thou hast given me, I have fought the good fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith.* O most excellent Lord, I have nothing else to do, but to receive from thy Hand the Crown of Righteousness, which thou hast promised to all that love thine Appearance. I have nothing else to do, but to enter into thy glorious Rest, where thou dost embrace in thine infinite Mercies all such as overcome Sin and Death, and keep thy Word unto the End.

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A Prayer and Meditation for one who prepares  
for Death, by Repentance and an holy Life.

**S**ince Sin hath brought Death into the World, and render'd this Enemy so terrible to us; enable me, with thy divine Virtue, to disarm it of all its fiery Darts, and mortal Poison. In regard thou hast prepared for me this heavenly Kingdom, from the Creation of the World, grant me Grace to employ the Residue of this Life in purging my Conscience from dead Works, in studying the great Business of Sanctification, that I may be in a Readiness to enter into that Abode of Holiness, into which no impure thing can be admitted. O heavenly Father, discover to my Soul, by the Light of thine holy Spirit, the Foolishness and Deformity of Sin, and its dreadful Consequences; that I may abhor it as an infernal Monster, Satan's Image, and a grievous Pollution, that hath defac'd in our Souls the blessed Features of thy self. Let me look upon it as a cursed Burning, that hath kindled thy Wrath, and will at last set on Fire and consume this Frame of the World. Let me look upon it as an intolerable Burden, under which Nature itself groans; and Heaven complains of it as a publick Murderer of our first Parents, of all Mankind, and the Lord of Life. O that I may treat it as mine Enemy, that hath provoked thy Vengeance, and strives yet to cast me into eternal Torments: Make me sensible of the Beauty of Holiness, and of the Glory that shall crown it; that mine Affections may embrace it as an invaluable Jewel, taken from me by Satan, as an Image and Beam of thy Perfections, and as that which shall make the principal Part of our Happiness in thy Kingdom. O God of my Salvation, thou seest my Grief and inward Trouble, to have so long assisted this Tyrant Sin, to destroy my Soul, and to have neglected my chief Business in the World, to serve and glorify thee. What shall I pretend as an Excuse for my self? O my Sovereign Lord, I have sinned against thee, and committed abominable Acts. But I repent in Dust and Ashes, and cannot but look back upon my evil Deeds with Horror. O God who searchest the Heart, thou knowest that my greatest

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Grief proceeds from my not grieving sufficiently, and as mine Iniquities have deserv'd. The Number and Greatness of my Crimes are not hid from thee; and thou understandest what I ought to do and to be, to obtain Pardon. O Lord, I seek not the Motive of it in my self, but in thine infinite Mercy, that desirest not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should turn and live. Turn me, O God, and grant me the Grace of Repentance. Thou art able to change this stony Heart, and cause it to yield penitent Tears; but rather give me, instead of this hard Heart, another fashioned after thine own Image; an Heart that may be inflamed with Love and Zeal for thee. O my Redeemer, thou hast completed the Work of my Salvation, by spilling thy own Blood to atone for us. Continue that good Work in us. Sanctify my Soul and Body, and make me a new Creature. Mortify this wicked Flesh, with all its Lusts, that the Life I shall lead may be in Imitation of the holy Jesus. Take Possession of me by the Directions and Government of thy blessed Spirit, that I may detest and shun all Appearances of Evil, and the Garments defiled with Sin. O let the Thoughts of Death, thy holy Fear, the Misery of departing sinners, and the Happiness of such as die in thy Favour, be entertained continually in my Mind, that I may renounce all Impiety and worldly Lusts, and finish my latter Course in Sobriety, Justice, and religious Duties. But chiefly, let Charity influence my Affections and Actions; for such Sacrifices are acceptable to thee. O merciful God, the great Business of Life is not quickly finished; my Days are but short, and I know not how soon thou wilt fetch me away. Assist me therefore in the Performance of what thou requirest from me, and accomplish me in thy good Work; that at thy Coming I may not be surpriz'd or troubled, being diligently employ'd in thy Service. O my gracious and heavenly Father, vouchsafe unto me all those divine Qualifications needful to dispose me for thy eternal Communion, and for the Society of thy blessed Saints, that are gone before me; that at my Departure, my Saviour may receive and welcome my Soul, with a Come, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord, Amen.



## C H A P. XII.

*The Sixth Remedy against the Fears of Death  
is to repose ourselves upon God's good Pro-  
vidence.*

SOME Persons there are so brutish and stupid, that they never think upon the great End and Design of their Creation, and are not able to give a just Account wherefore God hath put them into the World: carnal and earthly Minds, who imagine that they were created for themselves, as brute Beasts, only to eat and drink. Such are mention'd by St. *Paul*, their God is their Belly, and their End is eternal Misery. But there are also some wise and virtuous Souls, that are continually meditating upon the Favours they received from Heaven, which they employ to their right and proper Use. Such celestial Understandings being enlightned from above, consider very well that they are not born for themselves, but for their Country, for their Parents, for their Friends, and chiefly to serve God and his Church on Earth. Therefore they desire to live only to glorify their Creator, and advance his Kingdom.

When this good Desire is well govern'd, 'tis acceptable to God, as a sweet smelling Sacrifice. This was *David's* earnest Desire in *Psalms* cxix. *Let my Soul live, that it may praise thee.* This holy Zeal forced so many bitter Tears from King *Hezekiah* in his Sickness, and caused him to intreat most earnestly to live yet longer in the World. This wise and religious Prince well foresaw the fearful Evils, the grievous Confusion, and the abominable Idolatry that was likely to succeed after his Death, in the Kingdom of *Jehoiachin*. He was therefore very desirous to glorify God on Earth, and to accomplish the Reformation which he had begun. He desir'd to have Children whom he might teach to fear God with all their Hearts, and to

serve him according to his holy and divine Will, that he might cause Piety to continue in his House, and Royal Family. He discovers this holy Desire in his divine Hymn, which he sung unto God after his miraculous Recovery, *Behold, for Peace I had great Bitterness, but thou hast in Love to my Soul delivered it from the Pit of Destruction; for thou hast cast all my Sins behind thy Back; for the Grave cannot praise thee, Isa. xxxviii. Death cannot celebrate thee, they that go down into the Pit, cannot hope for thy Truth; the Living he shall praise thee, as I do this Day, the Father to the Children shall make known thy Truth. The Lord was ready to save me, therefore will I sing my Songs to the stringed Instruments, all the Days of my Life in the House of the Lord.* We find the same earnest Desire in St. Paul; for when he looks upon himself, and upon the Miseries that attended him on Earth, and lifts up his Eyes to see the heavenly Bliss that waited for him above, he desires to depart out of this earthly Tabernacle, and to be with Christ, and acknowledgeth that it would be his great Advantage. But when he looks upon the Church of Christ, his Desire of the Salvation and Instruction of his Brethren causeth him to prefer their Comfort to his own Happiness and Joy. 'Tis, saith he, *more expedient for you that I remain in the Flesh, and I know for certain, that I shall abide and remain with you for your Advantage, and the Joy of your Faith.*

This Desire of Life, with an Intent of glorifying God, is good and holy. But 'tis no easy Talk to keep it within its just and lawful Bounds, for very often it becomes vicious, when it is stirred up by a fond Love of our own Persons, which makes us loth to die.

For Example, when a great Prince, animated with an heroical Virtue, is engaged in a War for the Preservation of his Subjects, and for the Delivery of many afflicted People from Oppression and Tyranny; if God blesteth his Arms, and causeth his glorious Designs to succeed, he will not be pleased, if Death at that Instant offer to cross him, to break in pieces

his victorious Arm, to put an end to his Conquests, and to cast his Crown to the Ground. He may justly complain in this Manner, Must I now leave off such a notable and brave Design? Must I here stop in the midst of such a glorious Race? Must Death bury, with my Body, the Expectations of so many good Men? I am afraid that all my Labours will vanish away with my Breath. I have just Cause to fear, that my Fall will draw after me the Destruction of many poor People that depend upon me. I fear, that Oppression and Tyranny will resume fresh Spirits and a greater Boldness, and prove, for the future, more grievous and insufferable. O cruel and inhuman Death! by taking away my Life, thou bringest my Friends to Execution, and the Arrows that thou stickest in my Heart, pierce the Souls of many innocent People.

Likewise, he that is promoted to be the King's Viceroy in a Province, or to be a Governor of a rich Country, an important Place, may be grieved, because Death snatched him away in the midst of all his Business, especially if it be in troublesome Times, and if he sees none of a sufficient Ability to succeed him. Must I, will such an one say, must I quit so soon this glorious Employment, must I so quickly leave my Princely Service, and forsake so many poor People as a Flock without a Shepherd? Death! how hateful and odious art thou? Thou delightest to bring all things into Confusion and Trouble.

Thus a brave General of a victorious Army, who being full of Courage, manageth a successful War for the Honour of his Prince, and the Advantage of his Country, cannot but complain against Death, when he comes to subdue him before he hath totally subdued and overcome his Enemies; especially if the Times be so unhappy, that none is able to succeed him in that Employment, he will be ready to break forth into Complaints. Must I leave off so many glorious Designs? Must I forsake my most faithful Soldiers,

and



and abandon them to the Mercy of their Enemies, or to the capricious Humour of an unexperienc'd Successor! O Death full of Envy! wilt thou pluck out of my Hands so soon this conquering Sword, and cut off with one Blow of thy Scythe so many great Expectations? In the same Manner, he that sits in the most honourable Seat of Judicature, as a Judge, a President, or a Counsellor, or any other chief Magistrate, will doubtless mourn if Death seizeth upon him in the Flower of his Age; especially, if he fears that after him corrupt Men will succeed, who may be likened to whitened Walls. Must I, will he say, leave so soon this noble Office, in which I took so much Delight? O inconsiderate Death, why dost thou not suffer me to wear my Purple, until such time as I shall be weary to bear it? Why dost thou not permit me to sit here upon this magnificent Seat, until I tumble off with old Age?

Likewise a faithful Minister of the Gospel, when he perceives the Work of the Lord to prosper in his Hands, Satan falling from Heaven by his Means, as Lightning, and *Dagon* brought upon his Face to the Ground, may justly wonder at Death's Approaches, and speak in this Manner, Must I so soon quit the Duties of this holy Function, in which I took my greatest Delight? Must I break off from this sacred Work, by which I advanced so happily the Glory of God? I am afraid that when I am gone, ravening Wolves will enter into the Lord's Flock, and a terrible Night of Ignorance will overshadow our Posterity.

Thus a Father of a Family, who passionately loves his Wife and his Children, shall never see Death, but shall feel all his Bowels move, and his Heart tormented with Grief; he will sigh out such Expressions as these, Must I forsake a poor forlorn Wife, swimming in Tears? Must I leave my tender-hearted Parents, who found my Life a Comfort, and will find my Death an Affliction? Must I abandon my dear Children, whom I love as my Soul, without a Guide, and in danger of lo-

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sing the small temporal Means that I have provided for them ; in Danger also of being overcome by the vicious Customs of the Age, and inticed to Idolatry and Superstition:

That we may be able to govern this violent Passion, that prevails so much upon our Minds, we must labour betimes to bring ourselves to this ; *To rest upon the good Providence of our heavenly Father.* Christian Souls, meditate upon this excellent Saying in *Psal. xxxvii. Leave thy Ways to the Lord, and trust in him, and he will direct thee.* And in *Psal. lix. Cast thy Burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee.* Forget not also that blessed Exhortation of St. Peter, *Cast all your Care upon God, for he careth for you.* Imprint also in your Minds St. Paul's Assertion, *All Things work together for good to them that love God.* Remember the noble Resolution of this great Apostle, *According to my earnest Expectation, and my Hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all Boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my Body, whether it be by Life or by Death.*

Thou desirest to be instrumental in the Service of God, and of the Publick. 'Tis an excellent Desire indeed and praise-worthy, but it belongs to God to appoint the Service that he intends to receive from thee. It belongs to him to prescribe to thee thy Task, and to order thy Bounds. He knows when he is to release thee from thy Labour, and how long thou must fight. Is thine Eye evil, because thy God is so good and gracious to shorten thy Work and Troubles ? All such as follow chearfully the Banners of the Lord of Hosts, and never retreat without the Command of the great General of Heaven and Earth, shall enjoy a blessed Victory, and obtain the Honour of the Triumph ; as well the Novice and the fresh Soldier, as the old and long-experienced. All such as labour faithfully in the Lord's Vineyard, shall receive from him an eternal Reward, as well he that continues but an Hour, as the other that bears the heat and burden of the Day. When  
thou

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thou shouldest have gone but a few Steps in the Paths of Righteousness, thy God is so noble and liberal, that he will bestow upon thee an incorruptible Crown of Glory, as well as if thou hadst continued there many Years.

Great Princes, who yield to the King of Kings a religious Respect, that seek your greatest Glory in the Cross of Christ, submit your selves altogether to the Pleasure of your universal Monarch. For seeing the Lives of all Men are governed by his wise Providence, he hath a particular Regard, and an high Esteem of the Lives of Kings and Princes, the Sons of his right Hand. Therefore whilst 'tis expedient for his Glory and their Salvation, that they should live upon Earth, he placeth round about their sacred Persons his holy Angels, and encompasseth them with a Wall of Fire. Remember that as soon as the King of *Israel* was seated upon the Throne, God commanded him to take in Hand the Book of his Law, and to read in it all the Days of his Life. Ask from him that Wisdom and Prudence that is requisite to govern such Multitudes of People, and beseech him to grant unto you the Strength and Virtue that is necessary to bear so great a Burden. Let the Sword that he hath intrusted in your Hands, be to do Justice upon Offenders, and to protect the Guiltless. As you are living Images of God's sovereign Authority over his Creatures, remember that you should also imitate his Goodness and Mercy. Follow the Example of him who resists the Proud, but gives Grace to the Humble. Live in such a manner, that your Subjects may cherish and honour you as their common Father, may obey and serve you as their Lord, and may respect and fear you as their King. Suffer not your Heart to be puffed up with Pride, when you behold the large Dominions that God hath put under your Command, and the People that own you for their Sovereign: But lift up your Eyes to the spacious Heavens, take a View of their vast Extent, and see how the whole Earth is inconsiderable in comparison



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parison of them, and think upon God, before whom all Nations are but as the smallest Dust of a Balance, and as a few Drops of Water. Consider well that your Subjects are Creatures that God hath made after his own Likeness, and redeemed by the Death of his Son, and that they are to reign with you for ever in Heaven. Remember that the more God has committed to your Trust, the greater must be your Reckoning, and that you must one Day appear in Person before his dreadful Throne, without Scepter or Crown, or as other wretched Sinners to implore his Mercy. Search into your selves and examine what you are; your Bodies are subject to Wounds, Infirmities and Diseases, as that of the meanest of your Servants; your Souls are also moved with the same Passions and Lusts as theirs. In short, you are enter'd into the World in the same Manner as the most miserable Slave, and you shall go out of it again as he doth. So that if a Croud of Flatterers sooth you up as they did *Herod, a Voice of God, and not of Man*, Acts xii. Mind well what God speaks to you from Heaven, *I have said that ye are Gods, and the Children of the Most High, nevertheless you shall die as Men, and you that are the chiefest, shall fall as the rest*, Ps. lxxii. During the time of your Abode in the World, employ your Blood, Sweat, and all the Strength and Power that God hath put into your Hands, for the Good and Advantage of your Empire, and for the Defence and Preservation of your People, that are under your Protection. And if, in the midst of your greatest and most flourishing Prosperities, Death comes to give you a Summons to depart, let fall the Scepter willingly, to join your Hands together, and to fall down and adore the King of the whole Earth. Grieve not for the Loss of worldly Glory that passeth away as Lightning, or as a Shadow, for God promiseth another, that shall be more lasting than the Light of the Sun. If you can but overcome Death and your selves, God will cause you to sit down upon another Throne, and will bestow upon you a Kingdom that will never be moved. *Revel. iii. Heb. xii.*

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Wife and religious Princes, be not solicitous for the things that shall happen after your Decease. He by whom Kings reign and Princes do Justice is able enough to enrich your Successor with the Graces and Qualities that become a powerful Prince. It may be that he will bestow upon him more Glory and Happiness than upon you. When King *David* had ended his mortal Race, God took him into his Rest. It seem'd at first, that the Loss of so good a Prince could not be repair'd; but God caused *Solomon* to sit upon his Father's Throne, and made him the wisest and the most happy Monarch in the World. *David* did but remove God's Ark, but *Solomon* built for him a stately and magnificent Temple. *David* was a Type of the Encounters and Victories of the Son of God, but *Solomon* represented his glorious Triumphs, and that eternal Peace with which he shall bless his Chosen in the Kingdom of Heaven.

What if you leave your Children under Age, be not discouraged, for God will preserve them, as the Signet upon his Right Hand, or as the Apple of his Eye. Think upon *Josias*, who was but eight Years old when he succeeded in the Kingdom of *Judea*; nevertheless there was never a Prince more holy and more religious, none ever did more good to the Church of God. And that you may be able to strengthen your Faith, and confirm your glorious Expectations, meditate upon the Life of *Joas*, who was but one Year old when his Father was killed, and an Infernal Fury sought to destroy him; but in the middle of so many Tragedies God preserv'd him alive by a Miracle, and placed him in a glorious Manner upon the Throne of his Fathers. Seeing therefore that 'tis the Pleasure of him who gives and takes away the earthly Crowns, leave chearfully this corruptible one, to receive another that is immortal and incorruptible: You also, noble Governors of Countries and Castles, that represent the Persons of your Kings and Princes, remember that this Dignity comes not only from the Appointment of your

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your Masters, but from God himself, who holds in his Hands the Hearts of all the Kings and Princes of the World. Remember what our Saviour told the Governor of *Judea*, *Thou couldest have no Power upon me, if it were not given to thee from above*, *John xix*. Let all the World see by you, that there is nothing more agreeable with Piety towards God, than Fidelity and Loyalty to your Prince. Take heed that you abuse not your Power and Authority in satisfying your Passions, and pleasing your Covetousness or Vanity. Protect not the Guilty, and oppress not the Innocent. Seeing that you are appointed to punish evil Doers, and to encourage such as do well, behave your selves as if you were always in the Sight of your Prince; or rather behave your selves, as in the Presence and in the Sight of God, before whom all things are naked and open, and as if you were to give up unto him an Account of your Stewardship. Whilst you are happily employ'd in the Service of your Prince, and of your Country, if Death comes to interrupt your Prosperity, yield your selves, without Resistance, to the wise Orders of him, who is both your Sovereign Lord, and theirs, to whom you must be subject on Earth.

Trouble not your selves with Thoughts of the Things that shall happen after your Death, and think not but that there are yet some worthy and able to succeed you in your Employments. When God is pleased to be favourable to Kings and to cause their Empire to flourish, he raiseth up faithful Ministers, and wise Governors; as when he gave to *Pharaoh* a *Joseph*, to *Hezekiah* an *Eliakim*, to *Nebuchadnezzar* a *Daniel*. When he pleaseth to search into his unfathom'd Treasures, he can quickly provide Men after his own Heart, adorn'd with all the Abilities requir'd for a worthy Discharge of a glorious Employment. In the mean while, if thou hast overcome Satan, Sin, the World, and Death, thou shalt go and take Possession of a greater and more lasting Glory. He that bears upon his Garments and Thighs this Inscription, *The King of Kings*, and the

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Lord of Lords, hath given out this unchangeable Promise, *He that shall overcome, and hath kept my Words until the End, I will give unto him Power over the Nations, and he shall govern them with a Rod of Iron.*

Right honourable Counsellors, that assist your Prince with your sage Advices, and you inferior Magistrates and Judges, never forget what *Jehoshaphat* said to the Judges of his Kingdom, *2 Chron. ix. Take heed what ye do, for ye judge not for Man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the Judgment. Wherefore, now let the Fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it; for there is no Iniquity with the Lord our God, no Respect of Persons, nor taking of Gifts, Psal. lxxxv.* Whensoever you go to take your Place amongst the Judges of the Kingdom, remember that God sits there upon his Throne, and every time that you give a Charge, or pronounce a Sentence, consider that you are to follow God's Directions, and that this great Creator takes notice of your Actions, Words, and of the Motions of your Heart, and that he understands your most secret Thoughts. Judge with the same Equity and Justice with which ye desire to be judged. If you be tempted to overthrow Right, to conceal Truth, or to commit any Injustice, either by a base Compliance, by an Expectation of worldly Advantage, or for filthy Lucre; remember that 'tis the Devil that tempts you; pray therefore to God to deliver you from his Power. And that you may be better able to command your selves with an holy Awe, mind that Death summons you to appear in Person; nay, drags you before the universal Judge of Mankind, to give up an Account of all your Actions, and of the Sentences that you have given. But if Death surpriseth you when you are discharging your Office with all the Diligence and Integrity imaginable; stay not till it forces you, but cast off willingly the Robes of Judicature, to take the Habit of a Suppliant, and pray to God that he may not enter into Judgment with you, because no living Creature shall be justify'd in his Sight, *Psal. xiii.*

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Let not the Thoughts of what shall happen after your Decease, obstruct your Christian Resolution. There are Men enough in the World of a sufficient Ability, to supply your Places, and God is able to raise up some that we dream not of, as when he created in one Day threescore and ten Judges in *Israel*, whom he endow'd with sufficient Abilities, and with the Graces of his Holy Spirit. He may produce some that will be as righteous and just as yourselves, and it may be, more enlightened with Discretion and Prudence than you. Come off therefore willingly from these Seats of Judicature, so beset with Thorns, upon which you should never rest without Horror and Dread, if you sincerely fear God, and go with Confidence to the Throne of Grace, that you may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in the time of Need, *Heb. iv.*

And as there may be as much regard to Religion in the Tents of *David*, as in the Temple of *Solomon*; and that the Sword of *Gideon* agrees well with that of the Lord of Hosts, I may make my Addresses to you, worthy Generals, brave Captains, and generous Nobility, unto whom Kings, Princes, and Commonwealths commit the Leading of their Armies. I speak not to you prophane Atheists, who laugh at the sacred Mysteries, and are of Opinion, that all Fear of God must be banished out of your Troops and Companies, and that the most wretched Varlets are the best Soldiers; but I speak to you, Christian and religious Commanders, who forget not, by your Promotion amongst Men, that you are nevertheless the Soldiers of Jesus Christ: And tho' you wear at your Side a material Sword, forget not to employ also the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God that dwells in your Hearts. Neither do I intend to speak to you that manage War, with an Intent only to satisfy your Revenge, your Ambition, or your Covetousness; but I speak to you, brave and worthy Captains, who have purify'd your Weapons in an heavenly Fire, who undertake War only to procure a more lasting Peace to the Publick, and fight only to serve

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serve your Prince and Country; you that are the great Bulwarks of States and Empires, by whose Labours and Vigilancy Men sleep in Security. Let the whole World see by Experience in your Persons, that there is nothing that agrees better with true Generosity, than Piety and the Fear of God. Behave yourselves always as in the Sight of your Maker, who is always present, and accompanies you in all your Actions. Remember that he hath commanded to remove all Filth from the Camp of *Israel*, because of his holy and divine Presence. If you will obtain his Blessing upon your Persons and Designs, cast out of your Armies the Filth of Vice, and punish, without Mercy, Rapes, Burnings, Impiety, and Blasphemies. Cause your Soldiers to put in Practice St. *John the Baptist's* most excellent Advice to the military Men of his Time who enquired what they were to do to be saved; *Do Violence*, said he, *to no Man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your Wages.* Live as Lambs, and fight as Lions. Spare as much as you can the Blood of your Soldiers, and shed not that of your Enemies, but against your Wills; for they are God's Creatures and bear his Image. Never trust to your own Valour and Experience, but remember that 'tis God that gives Courage, and strengthens your Hands in the Day of Battle, who causeth Fear and Terror to fly whither he listeth. Look always upon *David's* Example; there was never a Captain more courageous, nor more willing to venture his Life; and yet there was never a Person more zealous in Prayer to God, nor more submissive to his Will, nor more careful to return unto him the Praises of all his Advantages. And if Death comes to put a Stop to your Victories, or to call you away in a time when your Prudence and Courage are requisite, wonder not at it; consider that God offers you by this Means an Occasion of a more glorious Victory, and a more magnificent Triumph. For the Victory over thousands of mortal Men, and of the whole World, is nothing in Comparison of the Victory over Death and Hell.



Hell. Inquire not who shall succeed you in the Conduct of your Army, out of a Distrust of God's Providence. For he who is able to raise up Children unto *Abraham* out of Stones, can raise up also from thence Captains and Soldiers. When he pleaseth to give a Check to the Enemies Pride, and to deliver his People from their Tyranny; he can raise up *Gideons*, *Jephthas*, *Sampsons*, and such like extraordinary Commanders. Who knows but that he will cause a General to succeed you, that shall have more Courage and Generosity, and, perhaps, shall be blessed with a greater Happiness, and more glorious Successes? When *Moses* departed to his Rest, *Joshua* commanded in his stead, and for that Purpose. God enabled him with a noble Spirit of Wisdom and Courage. For one Enemy that *Moses* overcame, *Joshua* destroy'd thousands. Whereas *Moses* did but coast along the Land of *Canaan*, and turn up and down in the Wilderness, *Joshua* brought the People of *Israel* into that pleasant Country, and into a peaceable Possession of it. Since therefore 'tis God's Pleasure, leave to others the Care of temporal Wars, and go ye, gather the pleasant and delicious Fruits of an eternal Peace, which hath been purchased unto you by the Blood of the Son of God.

Likewise you faithful Ministers of Jesus Christ, remember to shew the Example of a Resignation to God's good Pleasure, according to your Doctrine. Let not Death cause you to draw back. Thou hast, Brother, a Will to glorify God on Earth; well, but thou shalt glorify him better in Heaven, with more Zeal, and less Impediment. Whilst thou art fettered with this sinful Flesh, thy Ministry must needs be accompanied with many Imperfections. Thou imaginest, that if it pleased God to prolong thy Days, thou may'st be instrumental in the Reformation of the World; but thou art mistaken, Brother; for this World is accustomed to Evil, and this Age is hardened in Iniquity: Preach as much as thou wilt to the Inhabitants of this inferior World, it shall be as in the Times of *Noah*,  
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the Herald of Righteousness, when the Patience of God waited for the Conversion of Sinners; for the whole Earth is so corrupt, that all the Thoughts and Imaginations of the Heart of Man are evil continually. They are rebellious and sinful from the Cradle; and if God doth not interpose his Almighty Hand, and implant in us the Virtue of his Holy Spirit, they will grow worse and worse, until they tumble into their Graves. If thou afflict never so much thy just and innocent Soul, and spend thy self in exhorting the greatest Sinners to fly from the Wrath to come, and the Judgments of God that hang over their guilty Heads; it may be thou shalt be mocked by thy nearest Relations, as *Lot* was by his Sons-in-Law. Tho' thou shouldest thunder out the Threatnings of God's Law against the Abominations of *Israel*, as zealously as the Prophet *Isaiah*, thou shalt be forced at last to confess, *I have laboured in vain, I have employed my Strength for nought*, Isa. xlix. Jer. vi. Tho' thine Eyes should be converted into a fresh Spring of Tears, and thou shouldest spend the Days and the Nights in calling upon the Superstitious, the Schismatics and Idolaters, to forsake their false Worship and their unchristian Proceedings, thou shalt not be able to soften the Hardness of their Hearts, nor overcome their Obstinacy; but they will be ready to speak to thee in the *Jews* Language to *Jeremiah*: *As for the Word thou hast spoken to us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, but we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own Mouths, to burn Incense unto the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out Drink-Offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our Fathers, our Kings, and our Princes in the Cities of Judah, and in the Streets of Jerusalem; for when we had Plenty of Victuals, and were well and saw no Evil*, Jer. xlv. Tho' thou shouldest speak with a divine Tongue, and with an heavenly Wisdom, thou mayest have good Cause to cry out, *Who hath believed our Report? and to whom hath the Arm*

*of the Lord been revealed?* Isa. liii. John xii. In short as the Rivers of fresh Water that run continually into the Sea cannot cure its bitter and salt Qualities; thus thy good and holy Life, thy learned and excellent Sermons will not be able to remedy the Corruption of this present evil Age, nor stop the Torrent, and hinder the overflowing of Vice. For thy Labour and Industry, if compared with the Corruption of the World, are as inconsiderable as a few Drops of Water in comparision of the Ocean. This cursed Earth may be watered with thy Sweat and Tears; it will nevertheless bring forth nothing but Briars and Thistles. The Weeds which thou thinkest to pluck up, will tear thy Skin, and draw Blood out of thy Hands. In short, he that plants is nothing, nor he that watereth but 'tis God who giveth the Increase, 1 Cor. iii.

'Tis justly to be feared, that in staying any longer time in this unwholesome Air, thou mayest receive some evil Impression from the general Contagion. 'Tis to be feared, that thou may'st soil thy pure Hands by handling so many Wounds and Sores, and that the Thorns of this cursed Earth may pluck off the Wood of thy harmless and innocent Life.

But tho' thou should'st have a thousand times more Gifts and Graces, and that thy Labours should bring far greater Advantages and Profit to Christ's Church it belongs not to thee to give Laws to thy God, but to follow the Motion of his Will. Leave to him the chief Care of his own Household, and rest upon his eternal Providence. He hath more right in the Church than thou canst pretend to, for he hath created it by his Power, and redeemed it with his precious Blood. He that cares not for his own, especially for those of his Family, hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel. And can God, who is Faithfulness itself and the very Being of Truth; God, who cannot deny himself, and whose Gifts and Callings are without Repentance, Rom. xii. Can such a God cast off all Care of his Church, of that which he embraceth with an

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eternal Love, and cherisheth as the Apple of his Eye?  
*Jer. xxxi.* This Father of Mercies, who hath not  
 spared his own Son, but hath delivered him to die for  
 his Church, how should not he with him freely give  
 her all things? *Rom. viii.* He understands better than  
 thou, and all the Men in the World, what is proper  
 and advantageous for his holy Congregation, and for  
 every Member that composes it. He knows how to  
 provide for all its Wants; for his Wisdom is infinite,  
 and his Providence is most wonderful.

When this great God hath a Design to plague his  
 Enemies, and to declare his Justice, he hath always fit  
 Agents ready, and his Quiver full of Arrows. As soon  
 as he commands the holy Angels that wait before him,  
 to cast their Sickles in the Earth, and to reap or pour  
 down the Vials of his Wrath: These holy Spirits fly  
 with an unspeakable Swiftneſs to perform his sacred  
 Pleasure, *Rev. xiv. and xvi.* Likewise when he intends  
 to do good to his Chosen, he finds in every Place the  
 Heralds of his Mercy, and his divine Hand is always  
 full of Blessings. As the main ocean of his wonderful  
 Bounty can never be dried up, likewise the Channels  
 by which he conveys them to us, shall never fail.

The Cause of thy Complaints should serve to appease  
 thy Grief, nourish thy Faith, and increase thy Hopes;  
 for if thou art graced with extraordinary Gifts, this  
 proceeds not from thy Nature, nor thine Industry, but  
 God's Favour and Bounty. Now thou mayst be as-  
 ſured that his Hand is not shortned, his great Power  
 is not lessened, the Well-Spring of all his Blessings and  
 Wonders is not stopp'd nor dried up, *Iſa. lix.* He that  
 sends a desir'd Whiteness, the Prognostick of an ap-  
 proaching Harvest, to the spacious Fields, *Job iv.* he  
 sends also, into his spiritual Harvett, Labourers,  
 when he sees it convenient. In this latter Age, and  
 the old Age of the World, as well as in the first  
 appearance of his Church, *Luke xix.* he finds Men to  
 work in his Vineyard, or rather, he forms and fashi-  
 ons them with the Hand of his Grace, and enables

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them by his Holy Spirit; for he gives the Mouth and the Tongue, he maketh deaf, dumb and blind, and restores the Eye-sight; he calls Things that are not, as if they were, *Matth. xx. Exod. iv. Rom. iii.*

When he designs for himself a Tabernacle, he calls by Name a *Bezaleel*, and fills him with the Spirit of Wisdom, of Understanding and Knowledge, in all manner of Workmanship, *Exod. xxxi.* When he resolves to deliver the Children of *Israel* from their *Babylonish* Captivity, and to build the Temple of *Jerusalem*, he hath at his Command *Cyrus*, *Darius* and *Artaxerxes*, *Acts xiv.* He stirs up *Zorobabel's* *Esdra's* and *Nehemiah's*. Likewise when he intends to repair the Breaches of his House, and to increase the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, he makes Servants and fit Agents, and bestows upon them sufficient Graces for such a noble Work, *Psal. viii. Mat. xxi.* As he hath never left himself without Witness in doing good, thus he hath never been without Witnesses to declare his sacred Truth, *Luke xix.* By the Mouth of Babes he perfects his Praise, and as our Saviour told the *Jews*, *If these beld their Peace, the Stones would cry out*, *Luk. xix.* God will take the Pillars of the Idols Temples to prop up his Church, rather than suffer it to fall down. He will change the Wolves into Lambs, and the Lambs into Shepherds, rather than his Sheep should want their necessary Pasture. He chuseth the feeble Things of this World, to confound the Strong; the Despicable, and such as are not, to destroy such as are, *1 Cor. ix.*

Thus God never leaves his Church without some Testimony of his Favour, some powerful Instrument of his Grace. But many times when he removes one good thing from us, he bestows upon us something more rare and excellent. This Consideration glads the Heart of *Joseph* upon his Death-bed, as appears by what he said to his Brethren, *I am going to die, but God will not fail to visit you, and cause you to go up from hence unto the Land, that he sware unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, *Gen. l.* For instead of a *Joseph* who had occa-

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fioned their Bondage, God raised up a *Moses*, who deliver'd 'em with a mighty Hand, and a stretch'd out Arm, 2 *Kings* ii. Thus God took up *Elijah* with a Chariot of Fire, but he gave unto *Elisba* a double Portion of his Master's Spirit, and caused his glorious Miracles to appear more admirable. Also our Lord and Saviour, when he had finished the great Work of our Redemption, ascended up into Heaven, a Cloud conveying him up to the Throne of his Glory; but according to the Promise, he hath not left us destitute, but hath sent us the Comforter to dwell with us for ever, namely, the Spirit of Truth, whom the World seeth not, nor can know, *Job*. xiv. Christ's corporal Presence was enjoyed but by a small Number of People; but this divine Spirit is like a large River that swells and runs over every where, *John* vii. This Holy Spirit is not only with us, but also within us; he is poured out into our Hearts, he seals us for the Day of Redemption, he is the Earnest of our Inheritance, until the full Consummation of the Glory reserv'd for us in Heaven. Therefore when this merciful Saviour saw his Apostles afflicted in an extraordinary Manner for his leaving of the World, he speaks to them in this Language, *Because I have said these things unto you, Sorrow hath filled your Hearts: Nevertheless, I tell you the Truth, 'tis expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you*, *Joh*. xvi. When *St. Paul* took his last Farewel of the Elders and People of the Church of *Ephesus*, they wept bitterly, being grieved to the Heart because he said, *That none of them should see his Face any more*. But to comfort them, he assures them that in Heaven they had a Father and a Protector, and such a Shepherd as would never forsake them. I commend you, saith he, to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them that are sanctified, *Acts* xxii. Remember therefore, O Man of God, seriously to consider all these things; if the Lord who has call'd thee to the sacred Function of



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the Ministry, continues thee in the World, labour with Courage and Diligence in thine holy Employment; be not tired in the Service of this good Master, and merciful Saviour; fight the good Fight of Faith, endure patiently all kind of Labour, as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ; be as earnest and as careful for the Lord's Sheep, as *Jacob* was for those of *Laban*. Hear what he professeth of himself, *In the Day the Drought consumed me, and the Frost by Night, and my Sleep departed from mine Eyes*, Gen. xx. *Jacob* endured patiently these grievous Pains and Labour, and the Time of his Service seem'd to him to be but a few Days, because of the Love that he had for *Rachel*. Likewise thou wilt joyfully endure the Troubles of thine Office, and bear with Patience all the Hardships, if thou dost sincerely love the Lord Jesus, and his heavenly Spouse; if thou dost esteem the Salvation of Souls, for whom Jesus Christ hath suffered Death; if thou hast well understood the Excellency of thine heavenly Reward, and the Glory prepared for thee, when thou shalt have finished the Time of thy painful and difficult Service, and of thy mortal Race. For they who bring many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever. *Dan. xii.* *Jacob* had to do with a deceitful and unfaithful Man; but God is not as Man, that he should lye, or as the Son of Man that he should repent, Gen. xxiii. *Be thou faithful unto Death, and he will give thee the Crown of Life*, Rev. ii.

If it is the Lord's Pleasure to lessen this Task, so that instead of employing thee in his Vineyard, he intends to take thee up into his Kingdom, to drink there of his new Wine; if at the time that thou thinkest of sowing with Tears, thou art transported to the Place where thou mayest reap with Songs of Triumph; if in lieu of the Opposition which you must suffer from Sinners, God will grant to thee his eternal Consolations, and receive thee into the harmonious Societies of the Church triumphant, adore his Goodness, and his infinite Mercy, cast thy self into his Hands, and re-

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olve chearfully, to will what is pleasing to him. If during thine Abode in this Valley of Tears, God hath given thee a Livelihood; and if thou hast found in him thy Joy, thy Satisfaction, and thy greatest Comfort, Death will be thy Advantage; thou shalt find in thy Saviour thy Rest, thy Glory, and eternal Delights, *Phil. i.* Meditate often upon the Words of the holy Apostle St. Peter, *The Elders that are amongst you, I exhort, who am also an Elder, and a Witness of the Sufferings of Christ, and also a Partaker of the Glory that shall be revealed. Feed the Flock of God which is amongst you, taking the Oversight thereof; not by Constraint, but willingly, not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind; neither as being Lords over God's Heritage, but being Examples of the Flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away, 1 Pet. v.*

You also, who are afraid to leave behind you a desolate, afflicted, and comfortless Widow; come and learn this Lesson, to rely upon the Goodness and tender Compassions of the Father of Mercies, who never fails to comfort the distressed in all their Affliction, and who is always near to them that call upon him in their Troubles, *2 Cor. ii. Psal. cxlv.* He favours the Widow to that Degree that he calls himself, *The Judge of the Widows*, *Pf. lxxviii.* that is, the Protector of their Integrity and Right, and severe Revenger of the Wrongs that they may suffer. Therefore God tells us in express Words, *That he maintains the Widow, and establisheth her Borders*, *Prov. xv.* Since Job was so merciful as to cause the Widow's Heart to sing, *Job xxviii.* how much more may she expect from God's Goodness? he will doubtless fill her with his heavenly Joys, and the ravishing Comforts of his holy Spirit. I mean not the foolish Widows that seek for nothing but Pleasure, worldly Diversion, and carnal Pastimes, who live in the Delights of the Age, and *who are dead whilst they live*; but I mean the wise Widows, who being left alone by their Husbands Death, have their Confidence

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and trust in God, continuing in Prayer Day and Night.

Our great God and merciful Lord hath not only said in general, that he is the Judge, the Protector, and Comforter of the Widow ; but he hath vouchsafed to some his most signal Favours and extraordinary Blessings. In the Reign of *Ahab*, while a cruel Famine overspread the Land, God sent the Prophet *Elijah* to a poor Widow of *Sarepta*, who was preparing herself and her Son to die, as soon as they had eaten a little Remnant of Meal and Oil that was left. But the holy Prophet comforted her in this manner, *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the Barrel of Meal shall not waste, neither shall the Cruse of Oil fail, until the Day that the Lord sendeth Rain upon the Earth,* 1 Kings v. Many poor Widows have met with the like miraculous Supplies. For by a secret Benediction God hath caused their Provisions not to fail them. Though perhaps they have not enjoyed any extraordinary Plenty ; this all-wise Purveyor hath furnish'd them with things necessary for them. So that not only both they and their Children have subsisted in the greatest Calamities, but they have had the Honour of assisting God's Prophets. And as the poor Widow of the Gospel gave Alms out of her Poverty ; such Mites have been more pleasing to God, than the Treasures of the Wealthy. Moreover, when the Son of God was in the World, he was pleased to express how much Care and Compassion he had of Widows. For when he met at the Gate of the City of *Naim*, a poor Widow weeping bitterly for her only Son, that was carried out to be buried, he was moved with a tender feeling of her Affliction ; therefore he raised the young Man to Life again, and restored him to his Mother. It was also at the Solicitation of some devout Widows, that St. *Peter* raised *Dorcas* from Death to Life. I must needs take Notice here of an admirable Story, proper to comfort every faithful Servant of God. The Widow of a deceased Prophet, made this bitter Complaint to *Elisha*, thy Ser-

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*want my Husband is dead, and thou knowest that thy Servant did fear the Lord, and the Creditor is come to take unto him my two Sons to be Bondmen,* 2 Kings iv. God, who hears the Cry of the Afflicted, had Compassion on that poor distressed Widow, so that he gave unto her, by *Elisba's* means, in a wonderful manner, sufficient for the Payment of her Debts, and for to nourish her Family. By this glorious Example, God declares the Care that he will have of his Prophets Widows, whilst they walk in his Fear, and continue in his holy Covenant.

To conclude, modern and ancient Histories are full of notable Examples of wise and virtuous Widows, who have discreetly govern'd their Families, and upon whom God's Blessings have visibly appeared.

Almighty God, who is wonderful in all his Works, causeth not only Fathers to make Provision for their Children, but he gives to some, such Children, in his Mercy, who provide for their Fathers, and are an extraordinary Blessing to their Family, as *Joseph* was to *Jacob* and his Household. Such wise and virtuous Children, who are so necessary to their Parents, whom they love and honour, might, out of their violent Affection for them, speak to Death in the Language of the young Man of the Gospel, *Suffer me to go first and bury my Father.* Let me alone a while in the World, suffer me to live, O Death, until I have accompanied my Parents to their Grave, until I have closed their Eye-lids, and perform'd the last Duties that Nature requires. But hearken, officious Son! what the Lord saith to thee, *Let the Dead bury their Dead,* but follow thou me. Leave to them that remain after thee, the Care of worldly Affairs, but do thou obey God's Call. Thy Charity for others must not cause thee to be cruel to thyself, and disobedient to the Command of thy God. Fear not to leave thy Father and Mother, when thou art going to cast thyself into the ravishing Embraces of thy Spiritual Bridegroom, and of thy heavenly Father. The great God, who hath given thee, or rather lent thee

thee to them, who caused them to subsist before thou hadst a Being, can feed and bless them without thee. His Mercy is not tied to thy Person, nor confin'd to thine Industry. When our Lord and Saviour was upon the Cross, at the sight of the Blessed Virgin, and the Disciple whom he loved, he said to his Mother, *Woman, behold thy Son*, and to St. John, *Son, behold thy Mother*, John xix. *and from that Hour that Disciple took her unto his own home.* In like manner, when God calls unto his eternal Rest him who was the Supporter of his Family, as *Joseph* was, he provides for them by some other means. So that if *Elkanah* could justly say to his Wife, when she wept, because she had no Child, *Am not I better to thee than ten Sons?* 1 Sam. i. we may say with more Reason, that God's Grace, his Assistance, and the Comforts of his Holy Spirit, are more worth than ten thousand Children.

The strongest Passion, and that which I judge to be the most apt to hinder a good Christian, is that which Fathers and Mothers have for their little ones; especially if they be in an Age unable to help themselves. But that this natural Passion may not transport us beyond the Limits prescrib'd by Reason and Piety; consider well the Promise that God made to *Abraham*, *I am thy God, and the God of thy Seed after thee*, Gen. xvii. and what St. Peter told the *Jews*, *To you and to your Children was the Promise made, and to all such as are afar off, as many as the Lord our God shall call*, Acts ii. Chiefly meditate well on, and imprint in your Minds, that which God spake to you from Heaven, by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Leave me thy fatherless Children, and I will give them to eat, and let thy Widows trust in me*, Jer. xlix. God is the Father of us all, but more especially of the Fatherless; he hath Compassion on them, and provides for all their Necessities. Thy Children are more tender to him than to thee; for thou hast been but a feeble Instrument in his Hand to put them into the World. But he is the Creator of their Souls, the Maker of their Bodies, and the Redeemer

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of them both. He loves them with a stronger and more constant Love than the best Fathers, and the most tender-hearted Mothers. Therefore he assures us, by his holy Prophet, that tho' the Mother should forget the Child to whom she gives Suck, and tho' she should have no Pity on the Fruit of her Womb, yet he will never forget us. So that all the Children that fear God, may say as *David*, *When my Father, and my Mother have forsaken me, the Lord will receive me.* Psalm xxvii.

If *Job* had a tender Care of the Orphans, *Job xxxi.* and *Pharaoh's* Daughter had Compassion on the Tears of a little strange Child, how much more shall God, who is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, have pity on Children, that he hath redeemed with the precious Blood of his only Son? *Exod. ii. 2 Cor. i.* Since he hears the Cries of the young Ravens, he will sooner hear the Prayers, Sighs, and Tears of his Servants Children, *Pf. cxlvii. Matth. vi.* He cloaths the Grass of the Field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the Oven, *Gen. ii.* how much rather will he cloath your Children, O ye of little Faith? Doth your heavenly Father nourish the Birds of the Air, and will not he rather feed your Children that are better worth than all the Birds together? *John xiv.* In short, since God hath had Compassion on little *Ismael*, and on the Children of *Nineveh*, how much rather will he regard Children that have been sanctified to him from their Mother's Womb?

Our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was on Earth, took up in his Arms the little Children that were brought to him, laid his Hands upon them, and recommended them to God his Father. And now that he is in Glory, his Love and tender Compassion for them is not lessen'd. Therefore if we offer him our Children with all our Hearts, he will take them into his Protection, and will stretch over them the Arms of his Mercy, that he will never take from them. In short,  
since



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since he promiseth to them the Kingdom of Heaven, and his eternal Felicities, he will not withhold from them Things needful for this present Life.

We can do nothing without God, but God can do all things without us. A great many Children become debauch'd, and are spoiled by their Parents over-fond Tuition; whereas many that are out of their sight, and live when they are departed, shew good Examples of Piety and Goodness. For Example, in *Isaac's* House, in the Presence of this holy Man, there was a prophane *Esau*, a Glutton; whereas *Jacob* that lived at a distance from his Parents, when he fled for fear of his Brother, had always before his Eyes the *Fear of Isaac his Father*, Gen. xxvi. Gen. xxxi. that is to say, the God whom his Father worshipped. In *Jacob's* House, *Reuben* defiled his Father's Bed with Incest; whereas *Joseph* in *Potiphar's* House, chose rather an apparent Death, and present Sufferings, than to touch his Master's Wife, Gen. xxxix. *David* had the Unhappiness to see some of his Children guilty of Incest and Murder, whereas *Joas* and *Josias*, two Orphan Princes, in their tenderest Infancy became virtuous and religious Kings, zealous for the Service of God. How many Children are there, who, notwithstanding all the Care and Labour of their Fathers, fall into Extremity of Misery? How many are taken from their Parents Embraces, and dragg'd from thence to the Gallows? whereas there are others, who, without Father or Parent's Assistance, don't only escape grievous Dangers, but rise to Honours and Dignities; as *Joseph* in *Egypt*, *Daniel* in *Babylon*; and *Esther*, a fatherless and poor captive Child, became a Queen; and God made use of her and of her Credit to deliver his People from *Haman's* Conspiracy. We see every Day that God bleffeth in an extraordinary manner many Orphans. Cast your Eyes upon the Children of the blessed Martyrs, and you shall find many whom God hath made notable Instances of his special Favours, and of the Mercy that he promiseth to shew unto thousand Generations

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Generations of them that serve him, and obey his holy Commands. Thou shalt meet with some that are much more happy in this Life, than the Posterity of the Persecutors. Thou shalt see them with Astonishment bestow their Alms upon the Children of such as have plundered their Houses and spoil'd their Goods.

Whilst you are yet in Being, exhort your Children to fear God, to serve him, and to addict themselves with all their Heart, to the Study of Piety, that hath the Promises of this Life, and the Life to come. Teach them first to seek the Kingdom of God and its Righteousness, and all these things shall be added to them over and above.

Finally, tho' your Life should be much more useful to your Children than it is, remember what our Lord and Saviour saith, *He that loves Son or Daughter more than him, is not worthy of him.* Heaven is far more excellent than the Earth. The Salvation and the Happiness of our Souls is to be preferred to all the Considerations of Flesh and Blood. 'Tis not just that such as have given us, or to whom we have given the Enjoyment of a temporal Life, should hinder us from the Fruition of a spiritual and eternal Life. Besides, when we recommend them to God, we put them into the Protection of a true and a wise Friend, who is acquainted with their Necessities, who is so good to procure them that which shall be needful for them, and is Almighty, able to accomplish all things which may be for their Advantage.

Let us therefore conclude, that 'tis the Duty of a good Father that fears God, not to resist Death, nor to fly from it when the Lord calls. But according to the good Example of the ancient Patriarchs, he ought to end his Days willingly with the praises of God in his Mouth, and with Exhortation to his Children to love him, fear him, and serve him with all their Heart, to continue in his holy Covenant, and to prefer him to all the riches and honours of this miserable Earth. And as  
when

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when our Saviour had bestow'd his Blessing upon his Disciples, a Cloud carried him out of their Sight into Heaven: Likewise when a good Christian shall have thus given his Blessing to his Children, he will shut his Eyes to all inferior Things, and think upon nothing but the eternal Bliss of the heavenly Paradise.

If God calls us to himself in a miserable and wretched time, when our beloved Infants are weeping about our Bed, ready to say to us, as *Isaac* unto *Abraham*, *My Father, here is Wood, a Fire, and a Knife, but where is the Beast for a Burnt-Offering?* Gen. xxii. God causeth the visible Signs of his heavy Displeasure to appear every where. In every Corner we see nothing but Fire and Sword. Death's frightful Image, and the fearful Appearance of Massacres do scare and terrify us. Destruction is come into the holy Places, the Fire hath reached as far as God's own Sanctuary, and no Body is able to deliver us. The Deluge of God's Wrath hath overspread our Land in such a manner, that as *Noah's Dove*, we can find no Place to set our Feet on. All our Expectation is, that God would also reach down his Hand to us from above, to receive us into that Ark which is above the Heavens, and to which our Soul is now departing, Gen. viii. If our dear Children speak to us in this Language, Let us, with the Courage, Assurance and Faith of the Father of the Faithful, return to them this Answer, *My Children, the Lord will provide*, Gen. xii. Rom. iv. 'Tis he that acts beyond Probability, and contrary to Expectation, who causeth the Dead to live, and calls things that are not, as if they were. He will send to you his good Angels to help you in all your Necessities. When you shall be reduc'd to the utmost Extremity, ready to receive the last Stroke of Death, God's Hand will stop the Sword of his Justice, he will change your Crying and Fears into Joy and eternal Gladness. There will be some holy and devout Soul, that loves the publick Peace and Tranquillity, that will bring to you the Olive Branch of Peace. God can appease the Tempest with



with his Breath; at his Command the Winds will be still, and the roaring Waves, that are ready to devour you, will return to their former Tranquillity. Otherwise he will preserve you miraculously alive in the midst of the greatest Troubles, and most fearful Confusion. And as *Abraham* found a Ram intangled in a Bush, likewise in the midst of the sharpest Storms of Affliction, and in the most intricate Difficulties that you dread, you shall find unexpected Sweetness and Comforts. And as several Colours of the beautiful Rainbow appear upon the Cloud, whence proceed the Storms and the Rain; likewise thus, in the greatest Afflictions God will give you some Testimonies of his fatherly Care, and of his Divine Love. The Confidence that you shall have in God, shall never be confounded; for the Love of God is spread in your Hearts by the holy Spirit, that he hath given you. The hotter the Fire of Affliction shall be, the more and greater Miracles it shall bring forth. The higher the Waters of your Flood shall rise, the nearer they will approach your Souls to God, and the nearer you will draw to Heaven, the Place of your Soul's everlasting Rest. Comfort therefore your selves, my dear Children, and assure your selves, that by the favourable Assistance of God's Grace and Mercy, we shall speedily see one another again. I shall not return to you, but you shall come to me; for I am going to that spacious and magnificent Dwelling, whither our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is gone before, to prepare a Place for us, and where he will embrace us all. *I am going up to my Father and your Father, to my God, and to your God.*

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A Meditation and Prayer for such as are in any Command, who prepare for Death, by trusting upon God's good Providence.

O King of Kings, and Sovereign Lord of the World!
I adore thy Divine Majesty, with a real Sense of thy
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special Favour, for having placed me in this honourable Station, advanced me to this Command and Empire, which I am now ready to resign into thy Hands; Suffer me not to be puffed up with Pride, or to forget my mortal Condition in the midst of all this outward Splendor and Glory. While I continue here, grant that I may study to promote thy Honour and Service, and treat such as are under me as my Fellow-Creatures, and thy Servants. Grant that I may behave myself as in thy Sight, and in all my Actions be ready to give up an Account to thee, my great Judge, of my temporal Administration. Grant that Death may never surprize me, but that I may be always prepared to entertain it with Joy, to lay down this Crown and Sceptre, to cast off this Purple Robe, and all these Marks of my Authority, to yield them into thy Hands. Wean my Heart and Affections from their temporal and deceitful Vanities, that I may be willing to part with them at thy Command. Let me look up to thy heavenly Kingdom, meditate upon those Divine Excellencies of Eternity provided for me, from which Death shall have no Power to remove me. I submit myself wholly with all the Riches, Grandeur, and Power that thou hast bestowed upon me, unto thy Divine Pleasure, to dispose of me as thy Wisdom shall judge convenient. But I beseech thee, good God, take into thy Protection the Subjects that I leave behind. Continue thy Truth and Gospel to them and their Posterity. Grant that my Successor may have the same Zeal, Love, and Care for Religion, that he may be a Support to it, and cause it to flourish more and more. Give to all thy People Grace to fear and love Thee, to be united among themselves, and obedient to Authority. And now, Lord, receive me into thine eternal Mercy, and into that Kingdom where I may glorify thee for ever.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for a Minister of the Gospel who looks upon Death with Joy and Comfort.

O Universal Shepherd and Bishop of Souls! I cannot sufficiently acknowledge and value the Graces, and Mercies with which I find myself blest, and thy Favour in calling me to an Office which the Angels esteem an Honour to be employed in, and in which thou hast been active during thine Abode in the World. Thou hast been pleased to appoint me a Minister of thy People, and to commit to my Trust the dearest and most precious Thing of the World, namely thy Church, for which thou hast expressed so great a Love as to give thyself and Life to redeem it. I am sensible, O Lord, of my Weakness and Insufficiency for so weighty a Charge; since I am to encounter with the World's Hatred and Cruelty, the Devil's Wiles and Malice, and many Hardships besides, from those who should encourage me. I expect therefore from thy Power and Goodness the Assistance needful to support me under all temporal Difficulties, while thou art pleased to continue me in this Employ. Open a wide Gate to the Gospel of thy Grace, that all People may see the Salvation of God. Disappoint all the Counsels of thine Enemies, and grant that I may neither be frightened nor corrupted in the Discharge of my Duty. Subdue Satan under our Feet, and grant that thy Truth may be always victorious over Error and Heresy. I am now, Lord, to appear before Thee, and give thee an Account of my Stewardship. I appeal therefore to thine infinite Knowledge, that can witness for me, how faithfully and sincerely I have endeavoured to perform the Duties of my Calling, and my Conscience can testify for me, that I have declared nothing, but what is agreeable with thy divine Oracles. I have endeavoured to instruct the Ignorant, to discourage Vice and Profaneness, to comfort the troubled in Mind, and in all Things to promote Religion, Piety, thy Glory, and the Good of thy Church in the World.

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I have prefer'd thy Will, and thy heavenly Treasure to all worldly Advantages. I have taken a singular Pleasure in declaring the wonderful Counsels of thy Wisdom, and the Mysteries of thy Kingdom. I have delighted and endeavoured to save Souls, so that I may say with David, The Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up. But for all this, I pretend not to be justified before thee. In all Humility I cast myself at thy Feet, to implore the Pardon of my frequent Imperfections, Neglects, and Miscarriages, which I know I have been guilty of in thy Service. I confess, I have been wanting in my Zeal and Charity, too remiss in the Reproof of Vice, too much concern'd for myself, and too affectionate for my worldly Interest. O Lord, if thou shouldest now treat me according to the Severity of thy Justice, and require from me the Souls perished by my Negligence, or evil Example, I should expect the Doom of the unprofitable Servant. But there is Mercy reserved for me with thee, O my God! Accept therefore my Repentance for all the Errors and Omissions of my Life past, and lay 'em not to my Charge; but comfort me with thy Salvation. Strengthen my Faith, increase my Hope and Assurance in thee. And when Death shall come to make a Dissolution, give me Strength and Grace to welcome it as thy Messenger, sent to remove me from my Station, to free me from my Pains and Labour, and to convey me to thine eternal Rest; where I shall be no longer sensible of the Viciousness and Impieties of the Age. Gracious God, preserve thy Church and People from all ravenous Wolves, and mercenary Souls; and raise up a faithful, solid, wise, and learned Clergy. Bring in our Dissenting Brethren, and give a Check to the Spirit of Division, that we may all serve thee in the Unity of the Spirit, in the Bond of Peace. But now I am called to another Ministry, where I shall meet with no Trouble, nor Resistance; no Weariness, Grief, Pain, Sorrow, or Displeasure; where I shall be received into the Embraces of my blessed Saviour, who will lead me to the Fountain of living Water, and wipe away all Tears from mine Eyes. Amen.

A Prayer

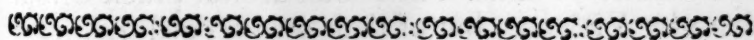
A Prayer and Meditation for the Father of a Family.

Father of Eternity, I yield unto thee my unfeigned Thanks, because thou hast made me an happy Instrument to put into the World, Children out of whose Mouths thou may'st accomplish thine own Praise, and who may serve thee here below, and worship thee for ever in Heaven, amongst the thousands of Angels. Whilst I have been in the World, I have brought them up in thy Love and Fear. I have caused them to suck from the Breast the Milk of Piety; and when they were come to an Age of Understanding, I have taught them to walk in thy Precepts. I have laboured to shew them a good Example, and to guide them in thy Truth. And now that I am ready to return unto thee, who art the Author of my Life and Being; the only Source of my Happiness, I leave them in thy merciful Hands, beseeching thee to look down upon them with the Eyes of thy Compassion. They are thine, O Lord, acknowledge thine own Image and Handywork. Thy Finger hath fashioned their Bodies, where so many Wonders are to be seen: And their Souls that animate and move them, are the Breath and Beams of thy Divinity. Thou hast engaged to be our God, and the God of our Posterity after us. Thy great and precious Promises have been made to us, and to our Children. O heavenly Father, I desire not that thou should'st take them out of the World, but that thou should'st keep them from evil. Cover them under the Shadow of thy Wings, and preserve them from those Miseries and Calamities, which thou hast threatned to send upon the Inhabitants of the Earth for their Sins. If thou chastisest them, let it be with the Rod of Men, and with the Scourges of the Sons of Men; but withdraw not from them thy Grace and thy fatherly Compassion. Let the Flames of Affliction render their Faith more pure, their Lives more holy, and their Zeal more sincere and earnest; and let it prepare them for thee and thine eternal Bliss. O holy Father, thou seest that the Age wherein we live is extremely corrupt, that the Earth is inclined to Vice, and that Sin

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reigns every where. Thou knowest also how weak the Nature of Children is, and how inclinable to Evil. Therefore strengthen them, I beseech thee, with such Antidotes as may preserve them from the Infection of the Times. Suffer not the Wickedness of the World to gain upon their Affections, nor Satan to prevail upon them by his Suggestions, nor evil Company to spoil their pious Education. Give them an Understanding to know thee, an Heart to love thee, and Affections to embrace thee and thy Glory. Let thy holy Angels guard them by Night and by Day. Let thy Providence defend them, thy Word instruct them, thy Promises comfort them, and thy Holy Spirit regenerate them, and imprint in their Souls thy blessed Image. Give them neither Poverty nor Riches, but nourish them with Food convenient. Make them to taste of the heavenly Gift, and of the Powers of the World to come. Inflame them with thy Love and Charity, and adorn them with all Christian Virtues; but chiefly, sanctify them with thy Holy Spirit, and make them to become new Creatures; since without Sanctification none shall see thy Face in Glory. Confirm them for ever in thy holy Covenant, and give them Grace to transmit it to their Posterity after them, as a blessed Inheritance, that thou mayest be glorified by them from Generation to Generation, to all Eternity. Suffer not the World, nor Hell, to pluck them out of thine Hand, that nothing may separate them from the Love which thou hast shewed to them in Jesus Christ thine only Son. Let not Death terrify them, but let it rather rejoyce and comfort them, because that 'tis the Entrance to the glorious Dwelling of their heavenly Father, and to the Celestial Paradise. Whatsoever Change or Alteration shall happen here below, let them always lift up their Eyes to thee, who art the same Yesterday, and to Day, and shall be the same for ever. Let them never forget their Duty to thee, from whom they have received their Being and Life, that they may prefer the Glory of thy Great Name, the Purity of thy Worship, and the Hopes of thy Heavenly Kingdom, to all worldly Glory, Magnificence, Riches, Advantages, and Pleasures of the Flesh

Flesh. Merciful and Almighty Lord, I shall not say to thee as Esau did to Israel, when he had blessed Jacob; My Father, hast thou but one Blessing? For I am certain that thou hast an infinite Number, and many inexhaustible Fountains of all manner of Blessings. But I beseech thee, with all the Zeal and Earnestness that I am capable of, to bless my dear Children with thy heavenly and principal Favours. Take them into thy Protection, bear them in thy Hands, embrace them with tender Compassion, and let them be as dear to thee as the Apple of thine Eye. I am now leaving the World and my Children, without Grief, or mistrusting thy Care of them. I am ascending with Joy up to thee, who art my God, my Father, and their Father; and I trust in thy great and eternal Mercies, that one Day we shall see one another in thine heavenly Kingdom, when we shall be admitted to behold thy Face, which shall fill us with unspeakable Gladness and Pleasure. Amen.



C A A P. XIII.

*The first Consolation against the Fears of Death;
God will not forsake us in our most grievous
Agonies.*

MAN is naturally afraid of Pain, and abhors Sufferings and Grief. Now the most of us are persuaded that 'tis impossible to die without enduring great Torments; therefore they abhor Death, not so much for its own sake, as for the Evils it inflicts upon us.

That we may be able to drive away this ill-grounded Fear, and strengthen our Minds against all Apprehensions, we must first consider, that Death is not so dreadful and painful as is commonly imagined. The Holy Ghost calls it a Sleep, and the Heathens themselves have said, that Sleep is Death's Cousin-german, and the Image of frozen Death. Now Sleep creeps upon us insensibly, it charms our Senses softly, and with

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invisible Fetters it ties and stops all our most active Faculties. Though we sleep every Night, we are not able to discover how this happens to us. 'Tis said of *Socrates*, one of the most famous Men of the first Ages, having in Obedience to the Decree of the *Athenian* Judges drunk Poison, when he felt the Venom benumbing his Senses, and Death creeping into his Veins, he declared with a pleasant Countenance, *That he had never swallowed any thing more sweet and comfortable.* Nothing can be imagin'd more pleasant, than the Death of the old Patriarchs. The holy Scripture tells us, That when *Jacob* had made an end of commanding his Sons, he gathered up his Feet into the Bed, and yielded up the Ghost, *Gen. xlix.* The same is related of King *David*, that when he had persuaded *Solomon* to fear God, and to do Justice, he slept with his Fathers, *1 Kings i.* God is as merciful to many in these latter Days, to cause them to die in speaking and calling upon his holy Name. Their Souls are not pluck'd from them by Violence, but of their own accord they leave the Body, and fly into Heaven with an holy Cheerfulness. The Separation of such Souls happens without Pain, Grief, or Suffering. Such are like to a Taper, that goes out without any Blast of Wind, of its own accord, when the Wax that keeps it alive, and nourisheth its Flame is totally spent. If you perceive some toss'd and tortur'd with grievous Pangs on their Death-bed, they are not properly the Pangs of Death, but the last Strugglings and Motions of Life. For I cannot imagine, that at the Moment of the Separation of our Souls from our Bodies, we suffer any Pain, because at that Instant. the Senses are then lulled asleep, and our Bodies have no more Strength, nor Life to hinder the Soul's departing.

Death is so far from being so dreadful and painful as we commonly imagine, that on the contrary, 'tis that very thing that puts an end to all our Pains and Miseries. And I am persuaded that the Diseases, that bring us to our Graves, are not so grievous as the other

other Distempers that we endure whilst we live here on Earth ; such as are a cruel Gout, a Stone in the Kidneys, or a Cancer in the Breast ; for they are Tortures that rack us continually, and a Fire that consumes us without ceasing. But if our Pains should be far more sensible, and that we should have Reason to impute them to Death, we have no Reason therefore to fly from it, or abhor its Approaches. For we have as good Cause to curse the Hour of our Birth, and weep for our Victories, for there is no Birth without Pain, nor Victory without Struggling. The most glorious and flourishing Lawrels are watered with Blood and Sweat.

The most excellent Things are attained with the greatest Difficulties ; and to speak according to the common saying, as *One Nail drives another*, so one Evil is a Remedy to many other Evils. We commonly seek, as a good thing, that Evil that frees us from the violent Pains that we can scarce endure. To be healed of our Distempers, we swallow bitter Pills and Potions, to gripe and torment our Bowels. To be freed from the Stone, we suffer a most painful Cutting. And that the Gangrene, which infects one of our Limbs, might not get to our Heart, we endure it with Patience to be cut off, whether it be Arm or Leg. Therefore tho' Death should be much more grievous, bitter, and more cruel than is commonly represented ; yet we ought to embrace it willingly, because it delivers us, not only from some one Disease, or some particular Pain, but in general from all Pains, Aches, and Distempers. The Physick expels not always the Humour that disquiets us. When we have drawn out a Stone from the Bladder, many times others grow in the Place that are worse. The Surgeon's Hand, let it be never so expert, answers not always his Patient's Expectation ; instead of removing his Pain, it sometimes increaseth it. But the Working and Cure of Death is always certain, and never fails ; the Success is always happy to a Christian Soul.

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That I may supply thee with some Comfort in the midst of thy great Pains and Sufferings, *My Brother*, or *my Sister*, remember that these Things happen to thee not by chance, but God appoints them as his Wisdom judges convenient. Ascribe not thy Disease to the Influence of the Stars, to blind Fortune, &c. but lift up thine Eyes to his Appointment, who hath stretch'd out the Heavens, and commanded the Succession of the Seasons, and who is the Author and Lord of thy Life. We need not tempt God, as the *Philistines* of old, and require from him a Miracle, to know if it be his Hand; for God assures us, that he himself inflicts the Wound, and binds it up; that his Hand strikes, and heals again, *1 Sam. v. Affliction cometh not forth of the Dust, neither doth Trouble spring out of the Ground*, Job v. Who is able to say, that these things are come to pass, and the Lord hath not commanded them? Doth not Evil and Good proceed from the Appointment of the most High? There is no Evil in the City but God hath done it; that is to say, that there is no Distemper, nor Affliction, but he over-rules and governs it by his wonderful Providence.

This Persuasion will stop our Murmuring in the midst of our greatest Troubles and violent Pains. It will cause us to say with *David*, *I have held my Peace, Lord, and have not opened my Lips, because it was thy doing*. Or if we offer to speak, it shall be in the Language of a blessed Servant of God, *Lord, thou troublest me; but 'tis sufficient for me to know that 'tis thy Hand*, Job. ii. As if he should have said, This Physick is very bitter, O great Physician of my Soul and Body, but I will freely drink it up, because thou hast prescribed it. 'Tis not just to receive Good at the Hand of God, and refuse Evil; to complain of a Disease that he hath sent us for a few Days, instead of Blessing him for the Health which he hath continued to us many Years. In short, when our Souls shall be troubled with the Anguish of Death, when Drops of Blood shall come out of our Veins, we must in such a Case lift up our Eyes to He-

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ven, and say with our Lord and Saviour, *Father, if it please thee that this Cup should not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy Will be done.*

The same Consideration will keep us from falling into Despair, and from fancying, that the Evils will swallow us up. For since God sends both Evil and Good, and that he is faithful and just, that he is true and merciful, he will not suffer us to be tempted, that is, that we should be afflicted above that we are able, but with the Temptation he will make way to escape, that we may be able to bear it, *1 Cor. x.* He kindles not all his Wrath at once, and employs not all his Fury. He discovers not all the Strength of his Arm, *Psal. lxxviii.* but when his Anger is hottest, he remembers to have Pity and Compassion on the Afflicted; for he knows of what we are made, that we are but Dust and Ashes, *Hab. iii.* He remembers that we are but Flesh, that is to say, Weakness itself, a Wind that passeth away, and returneth not again, *Psal. ciii.* He regulates his Chastisements, not according to the Horridness of our Sins, but according to our great Weaknesses, *Gen. xviii. Ps. lxxviii.* Therefore when God speaks of *David's* Son, the true and lively Image of the holy Seed, with whom he had concluded an eternal Covenant, he speaks in this manner, *If he commit Sin, I will chastise him with the Rod of Men, and with the Stripes of the Children of Men, but my Mercy shall not depart away from him, 2 Sam. vii.* And *St. Paul*, treating in general of the Afflictions with which God visits his Children, *1 Cor. x.* he stiles them, *Human Temptations*, to assure us that they shall never exceed the Strength and Power of our weak Nature.

The wise and experienc'd Physician appoints neither Physick nor Bleeding to the Patient, until he hath well examin'd his Pulse, and understood thereby the Disposition of his Body; and shall not God's eternal Wisdom, that never acts without good Reason, and that perfectly knows the Pulse and Temper of our Souls, that searcheth our Reins, and sees our very Heart, propor-

proportion his Physick and Remedies to our Weaknesses? For his Design is to heal, and not to destroy us. He once inflicted Punishments upon *Babylon* by Measure, and numbred the Vials of his Wrath which he poured upon the Seat of the Beast: And shall not this good God measure the Rods, and weigh the Afflictions with which he reproveth his Children? Shall not he number their Sighs and Tears? This Consideration comforts King *David*, *Thou*, saith he, *O God, tellest my Wandrings; put thou my Tears into thy Bottle; are they not written in thy Book?* Psal. lvi. Altho' Flesh and Blood may think otherwise, I am perswaded that Diseases may be looked upon as the sweetest and most favourable Affliction. It was *David's* Persuasion; for when he was to chuse one of these three Plagues, either War, Famine, or Plague, which is the most grievous, most hated, and dreadful of all Distempers, he chose the Plague. We should never forget the Reason of his Choice, *Let us fall now*, saith he to the Prophet *Gad*, *into the Hands of the Lord*, for his Mercies are great; *and let me not fall into the Hand of Man*.

The Evils which God sends to us, are Expressions of Love, and of his fatherly Care of us. For God begins his Judgments, that is, his Chastisements, at his own House, and shews most Severity to the Servants whom he loves best, 1 *Pet.* iv. Therefore he tells the Angel of the Church of *Laodicea*, *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten*, Rev. iii. The greatest Affliction that can happen to us in the World, is never to be afflicted; and the most grievous Temptation, is, never to be tempted. *St Paul* to the *Hebrews* speaks most excellently upon this Subject, *Forget not*, saith he, *the Exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto Children, My Son, despise not thou the Chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. If ye endure Chastening, God dealeth with you as with Sons; for what Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without Chastisement, whereof*
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all are Partakers, then are ye Bastards, and not Sons, Heb. xii.

All things work together for good to them that love God, *Rom. viii.* The Diseases of the Body are the Physick of the Soul. The Aches which afflict thee are Instructions to thy Mind. God intends to make the sigh for thy Sins, to water thy Couch with thy Tears, and abhor the Remembrance of thy former Miscarriages, *Pf. vi.* By the Causes of thy present Pain and Grief, he intends to taint thy Flesh, mortify thy Lusts, and make thee partake of his Holiness, *Heb. xii.* If it please God to sanctify his Afflictions to thee, thou wilt be able to say with *David*, *It was good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy Commandments. Before that I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep thy Word,* *Pfal. cxix.*

Tho' our Lord and Saviour was the only Son, and the Beloved of the Father, *Heb. v.* yet he learned Obedience by the things that he suffered. God hath predestinated thee to render thee conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the First-born among many Brethren. God purposes to strengthen thee with an holy Constancy, and to teach thee to possess thy Soul with Patience, *Luke xxi.* He causeth thee therefore to learn by Experience, that all Flesh is as Grass, and all the Glory of Man as the Flower of Grass. He designs to humble thee under his mighty Hand, that he may lift thee up in due time, *1 Pet. iii.* When God purposed to bring the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, *Exod. xxi. 5.* he caused the Yoak of their grievous Bondage to be more heavy, and loaded them with more intolerable Burdens. For the same Reason God sends Afflictions, and fills us with Bitterness, because he would bring us to a Loathing of the World, and of its Vanities, and to think upon Heaven, and its eternal Happiness, *1 Cor. xi.* He chastiseth thee, that thou mayest not perish with the World; he punisheth thy Body, that thy Soul might be saved.

As the Gold is tried in the Fire, thus the Lord casts us into the Flames of Affliction, that our Faith might be

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be tried, and appear more precious than fine Gold, 1 *Cor. v.* We glory in God in the midst of Tribulations, knowing that Tribulation produceth Patience, Patience Experience, and Experience Hope, 1 *Pet. iii.* Now Hope doth not make us ashamed, because the Love of God is spread in our Hearts by the holy Ghost, which hath been given to us. God will kindle again thy languishing Zeal, and enliven thy Prayers, that they may be more acceptable to him. Tell me not that thy Dis-temper is an heavy Burden, that hinders thy Soul from lifting itself towards Heaven, and that thy grievous Aches dry up the Moisture of thy Tongue, and cause thy Lips to stick together; for I mean not the Prayers composed by Art, but the holy Affections, and earnest Sighs of the Soul, sent up to God. A Groan of an oppressed Soul, and a Sigh forced from us by Necessity, and a Tear dropt from a penitent Heart, are far more acceptable to him, than Prayers of forty Hours, that come forth of an hypocritical Mouth.

When the Prophet *Moses* saw himself inclos'd between *Pharaoh's* Army and the *Red Sea*, he was so grievously perplexed, that he could not open his Mouth; but God heard the Voice of his Heart, and answered his silent Request. King *Hezekiah* muttered as the Crane, or as the Swallow, and groan'd as the Pigeon; and God had a Respect to his Groaning and Tears, and heard him from his holy Sanctuary. The Sighs of *Jonas* in the Whale's Belly, mounted up thro' the Waves of the Sea, and ascended to the sacred Habitation of God's Glory. The Cries of Jesus dying upon the Cross have pierced thro' the Bosom of our heavenly Father, and have moved the Bowels of his eternal Mercies. In short, God speaks thus of all his Children, *Before they cry, I will grant them their Request; and as they shall be yet speaking, I shall have heard them.* Therefore the Royal Prophet saith not only, *That God hath heard the Prayers,* but *hath heard the Desire of the Humble; thou wilt prepare their Hearts, thou wilt cause thine Ear to bear.* For that Reason, when the Apostle *St. Paul* makes
mention

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mention of that Spirit that supports our Weaknesses, and that teacheth us to pray, he saith, *That he crieth in our Hearts, Abba, Father, and maketh Request for us with Sighs and Groans that cannot be uttered*, Rom. viii.

Take good Courage, *My Brother*, or *my Sister*, and be not frightened at the Sight of Death. Thou seest a narrow Passage, a Way all beset with Thorns and Bryars, but 'tis Heaven's Gate, and the Way that leads to thine heavenly Paradise. For we must of Necessity march through a Valley of Tears, before we can enter into the City of the living God, *Psal lxxxiv*. We must pass thro' many Tribulations to come to the Kingdom of Heaven, *Acts xiv*. Blessed are they whom God afflicts, for they shall be comforted, *Mat. v*. Blessed is the Man that suffereth Temptation, for when he shall be sufficiently proved, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which God promiseth to them that love him, *Jam. i*. The Lord sends thee this Affliction, and this grievous Temptation, not only for thine own Good and Salvation, but also for the Benefit of others. By his wonderful Wisdom, he preserves the Communion of Saints, and so disposeth of every one, that we all contribute to the Building of his Tabernacle. Upon one he bestows Riches, that he should be bountiful in Almsdeeds; to another he gives Learning, that he might instruct the Ignorant, and comfort the Afflicted; he raiseth others to great Honours and Dignities, that they might be able to protect the Innocent, and deliver the Oppressed. Others are afflicted with desperate Evils, and grievous and long Diseases; others are deprived of their most needful Senses, as of their Eye-sight, or of their Hearing, that they might edify their Neighbours by an holy Constancy and christian Patience. The Ashes of poor *Job* have more Lustre than all the Gold and precious Stones of the World. 'Tis many Ages since he endured grievous and dreadful Calamities, nevertheless, his Patience is yet proposed to us for our Example, and to the end of the World it will always instruct the Church of God. He teacheth thee by the Evils which thou

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thou endurest, to be moved with Mercy and Compassion towards others in the same Condition. For as he required, that the Children of *Israel* should be gracious to Strangers, because they had been Strangers in the Land of *Egypt*; likewise he sends to thee Afflictions that thou mightest pity the Afflicted, and suffer with them as Members of the same mystical Body. This appears in Jesus Christ our Head; for tho' the chief End of his Sufferings was to redeem us, and to reconcile us to God his Father; nevertheless, the Holy Ghost informs us, that he was like unto us in all things, Sin excepted, that he might be a merciful High-Priest, and have Compassion on our Infirmities.

Finally, the Affliction that grieves thee, is not only sent to thee for thy Salvation, and for the Instruction of thy Neighbours, but also for the Glory of the great and living God, who hath made and formed thee. For we may say of every Disease that happens to good Men, as Christ says of *Lazarus's* Distemper, *This Sickness is not to Death, but for the Glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified by it.* Thou mayest be severe to thyself, but thou must be charitable to others, and judge discreetly of thy Brethren's Afflictions. When thou art in Pain and Trouble, think seriously upon thy Miscarriages, and turn unto God with all thy Heart. But when thou seest others cast upon a Bed of Sickness, do not argue from thence, as *David's* Enemies, that 'tis because they have committed some grievous Crime. Rather consider, that it may be a Means which God designs to employ to declare his Power, and his Servants Patience, Faith, Piety, and Virtues. Therefore our Lord and Saviour tells the Apostles, when at the Sight of a Man, blind from his Birth, they enquired from him, Whether the Man had sinned, or his Father or Mother, because he was born blind; *That neither the Man, nor his Father, nor Mother had sinned, but that the Works of God might be made manifest in him,* John v. By these Words we are not to imagine that they were without Sin, for there is none just, no not one;

one; but we must understand that they were not guilty of an heinous Sin, nor had committed any such Crime, as had drawn upon them God's Vengeance from above. It was God's Will that this poor Man should come into the World with that natural Imperfection, that he might make him an Instance of his Grace, and declare in him his Almighty Power; and that our Saviour, in giving him his Sight, might make it appear that he was the true God, who fashions the wonderful Eye, and that he was the true Light that enlightens every Man coming into the World, *Psal. xciv. Job. i.* Likewise, when some came to inform this great and wise Saviour, what had happened to the *Galileans*, whose Blood *Pilate* mingled with their Sacrifices, he replied in this Manner, *Suppose ye that these Galileans were Sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such Things? I tell you, Nay; but except you repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell and slew them; think ye that they were Sinners above all Men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay; but except you repent, ye shall all likewise perish, Luke xiii.*

God is glorified divers Ways by the Afflictions and Calamities which he sends to his Children. For, first, he justifies them before all the World, from the Calumnies which are cast upon them, and he discovers thereby to all, the Sincerity of their Love, and their unfeigned Obedience. Satan accuseth us for serving God for the Advantages which we receive in this Life, *Job. i.* because he is pleased to protect and favour us by his over-ruling Providence. Therefore God removes many times from us, that which is pleasing and delightful to the Flesh; he gives us the Bread of Affliction for our Food, and the Waters of Sorrow for our Drink; he presents us with Cups full of Bitterness, and causeth his Rod to return upon us often. By these grievous Temptations, he stops the Mouth of the Accuser of our Brethren, who accuseth them Day and Night before God, *Isa. xxx.* He declares by that means to all the Enemies of our Salvation, and of his Glory, that we

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put our full Confidence in God alone, and in his unchangeable Promises, and not in the outward Tokens of his Mercy and Favour, *Rev. xi.* He shews to all the World that the Anchor of our Hope is not fixed here below, but that 'tis fasten'd in Heaven, where Christ is entred as our Fore-runner, *Heb. vi.*

As God is glorify'd in Afflictions, he is also honoured by our Deliverance. If the Land of *Judea* had not been peopled with Deaf, Dumb, Lame, Blind, Decrepit, and possess'd with Devils, *Acts ix.* if *Æneas* had not been sick eight Years, if a poor Woman had not been grieved with a Bloody-Flux twelve Years, if another had not been vexed with the Disease that had bended her Body, if the sick of the Palsy had not been lying in his Bed thirty eight Years, if the Daughter of *Jairus* had not been dead, if the Widow's Son of the City of *Naim* had not been carried to the Grave; in short, if *Lazarus* had not been buried four Days, the Glory and divine Miracles of our Lord and Saviour had not been admired all over the World, *Mat. ix. Luk. xiii. Job. v.* Likewise our desperate Diseases, and our unexpected Recoveries, when human Skill can do nothing, declare to the most senseless Souls, that 'tis God alone that can give the Wound, and bind it up, and that leads to the Sepulchre, and brings back again, *Luk. vii. John xi. Job v. 1 Sam. ii.* God's Deliverances of his People from their Afflictions are of two Sorts, for either he takes away the Burden from us, or else he stretcheth out to us his merciful Hand, and helps us to bear it; either he removes his Affliction, and pacifies our Grief; or he strengthens us with Power and Courage, and arms us with Patience, and a generous Resolution needful in such a case. This appears in a notable manner in the Apostle *St. Paul*; for fear that he should be lifted up in Pride, because of the Excellency of his divine Revelations, God gave him a Thorn in the Flesh, and sent the Angel of Satan to buffet him, and to increase the Bitterness and Sharpness of his Disease. This holy Man prayed often to re-

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move it from him, but God took his Thorn away from his Flesh, nor did he check that Messenger of Satan that afflicted him; but he deliver'd him in a more illustrious Manner. For he strengthened him with his Divine Spirit, enriched him with his Graces; he made him feel the Virtue and Power of Christ within him, and accomplish'd his Virtue in *Paul's* Infirmary. Inasmuch that this Great Apostle cries out in the sharpest of his Afflictions, with Transports of Joy, *I take Pleasure in Infirmities, in Reproaches, in Necessities, in Persecutions, in Distresses, for Christ's Sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong; I can do all things in Christ that strengthens me,* 2 Cor. xii. This may be also seen in the Martyr *St. Stephen*; for he was condemned to die a Death the most painful and grievous that we can imagine; but God gave him such powerful Comforts, and fill'd his Mind with such Joys, that his Face shin'd as that of an Angel. You must understand the Words of *St. Paul* in that Manner, in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *Acts vi. Heb. v.* Jesus Christ having offer'd up Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears, unto him that was able to save him from Death, and was heard, in that he feared; for he was not altogether freed from the Sufferings and Torments of the Cross, but he endured them courageously, and was more than Conqueror in all Things. He drank up the very Dregs of the Cup of God's Wrath, but by his Divine Power, he overcame the Strength of the Poison. His Heavenly Father took him not down from the Cross, nor out of the Hands of his Murderers; but he hath erected upon it his glorious Trophies, and the Cross hath been as his triumphing Chariot. Likewise, when you see a Christian bear up in the midst of a grievous Affliction, and overcome his Grief by his Constancy and Patience, who, instead of mourning, rejoiceth, and comforts himself in his Distresses; you may then conclude, that such an one is strengthened by God's Divine Spirit, who upholds him, and accom-

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plifheth his heavenly Virtue in his Servant's Infirmary. This is the most miraculous and excellent of all Deliverances.

I confefs, fome approve this Difcourfe very well, and admit thefe Consolations in their ordinary Difcafes; but as foon as any extraordinary and violent Grievs feize upon them, they are apt to murmur againft God, and to complain, that their Punifhment is too grievous. Some proceed further to curfe, as *Job*, the Day of their Birth; and being brought into Defpair, are ready to cry out with *Cain*, My Punifhment is greater than I am able to bear. Unhappy Man! Wilt thou imitate the barbarous Heathens, who curfe the Sun when it burns them, and let fly their Arrows againft Heaven when it thunders? Wretched Man! What will it avail thee to affront thy Creator? What Advantage wilt thou reap from the Blafphemies which thou belcheft forth againft the Son of Righteoufnefs? Miserable Worm of the Earth, contemptible Duft, wilt thou undertake to contend with God, to pluck him from his Throne, and to break the invincible Arm of his Power? Dofth thou imagine to flop the Hand of his Vengeance, by offending and finning againft him? Wilt thou quench the Fury of his Wrath, by fputting in his Face? Believeft thou, that he will ftretch forth his Hand to deliver thee, and to increafe thy Bleffings, whilft thy Mouth is open to blafpheme him, who is thy Sovereign Lord?

Listen well, I befeech thee, Friend, to my Advice; and I will help thee out of the Labyrinth where thou art unhappily intangled; and with God's Help, I will caufe thee to underftand, that thou complaineft wrongfully againft him, who performs all Things advifedly, and with Juftice and Reason.

1. Run over the whole Courfe of thy Life, and confider how many wicked Acts thou haft committed; fome by Indifcretion, others wilfully; how many Words have efaped out of thy Mouth, how many Thoughts have been entertained in thy Mind againft

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the Commands of Almighty God. Consider seriously the Number and heinousness of thy Sins and Miscarriages, and thou shalt find that God's Punishments are far less than thy Deserts; and that for one sensible Stroke of a bitter Pain that thou feel'st, thou hast deserved many thousands. So that thou shalt have Cause to confess with the Prophet *Daniel*, *O Lord, Righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us Confusion of Face*, Dan. ix. And thou wilt say with *David*, *Innumerable Evils have compassed me about, mine Iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up, they are more than the Hairs of my Head; therefore my Heart faileth me; there is no whole Part in my Flesh, because of thine Indignation, nor Rest in my Bones, because of my Sin*, Psal. xl.

2. Consider how many are in the World to be preferred before thee for Piety, and yet suffer sharper and longer Evils than thou hast hitherto endured, and have not had so much Comfort and Assistance. If thou comparest thy Condition with theirs, thou shalt find that God spares and favours thee very much.

3. Cast thine Eyes upon the Death and Passion of our Lord and Saviour; who being just and innocent, hath suffered for us wicked and abominable Sinners. Thine Affliction is painful, I confess, but that which thy merciful Redeemer has undergone for thee, was far more unsufferable. Let his Exclamations, his Tears, and Drops of Blood, which came out of his Veins, be a Witness; and that earnest Prayer which he repeated three times upon his bended Knees, *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me, that I may not drink it*. Let that doleful Voice upon the Cross declare it, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

4. Weigh in just and equal Scales of the Sanctuary, all the Sufferings of this Life, with the Torments of Hell, which thou hast justly deserv'd. Compare them together and thou wilt quickly conclude, that all thy Pains are nothing in Comparison to the grievous Tor-

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tures of that Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where there is weeping and gnashing of Teeth. If thou art sensible of these vanishing Pains, consider well, how much thou art obliged to the Goodness of God, who hath freely pardon'd all thine Offences, and redeemed thee from that eternal and unspeakable Misery of the other Life.

5. Thou must imitate those Men, who having their Sight dimn'd with the extraordinary Splendor of bright Colours, or of a Body of Light, turn off their Eyes to look upon less offensive Objects. Instead of handling always thy Wounds and Sores, instead of thinking of the Afflictions that lie heavy upon thee, meditate upon the Goodness and Favour of God, vouchsafed to thee since thy Conception until now. I give thee Leave to put in one Side of the Scales, all thy Crosses, Losses, Diseases, Pains, and Grief, upon Condition, that in the other Scale thou wilt cast all the Mercies, Favours, Blessings, and Deliverances, which thou hast received from God's liberal Hand. 'Tis true, thou groanest under thy Misery, and complainest of thy Condition; thou verily believest that there is none so miserable as thou art, so that willingly thou wouldst say with the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Doth not this move ye, O ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the Day of his fierce Anger.* But tho' there should be nothing else but this alone, that God hath called thee to the Knowledge of his Holy Will, enriched thee with the Graces of his Divine Spirit, and sown in thy Heart the Seeds of eternal Life, and the blessed Hopes of seeing his Face in Glory; thou oughtest to look upon thyself, as one of the happiest Creatures under Heaven.

6. Finally, Thou must meditate with a religious Attention, upon the Joys, and the eternal Blessedness of Paradise; for I reckon, with the Apostle, *that the Sufferings of this present Life are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us*, Rom. viii.

When

When we cast our Eyes upon the Earth alone, we judge it to be very spacious and large. Our Sight is lost in the Contemplation of so many Provinces, Cities, and Kingdoms; but when we compare it with Heaven, we find it to be but a Point. Likewise, when we look upon, and reckon up the Hours, Days, Weeks, Months, and Years of our Sufferings, the Time appears very tedious and long; but when we compare all these Parcels of Time with Eternity, they seem to us but a Moment. Tho' we should have been plung'd in the Depths of Evils and Miseries, from the first instant of our Entrance into the World, until the last of our going out; yet we have Reason enough to say with St. Paul, *Our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory; while we look not at the Things which are seen, but at the Things which are not seen; for the Things which are seen are temporal, but the Things which are not seen are eternal,* 2 Cor. iv.

The only Spring of all our Comforts, is God's gracious Promise of seasonable Help in time of Need. Imprint therefore in your Minds these Divine Passages, *When he that loveth me shall call upon me, I will answer him; I will be with him in Trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him,* Psal. xci. *The Lord delivers from all Temptations them that honour him; he is rich unto all that pray unto him,* 2 Pet. ii. *He is near to all them that call upon him; yea, to all them that call upon him faithfully,* Rom. x. *He accomplisheth the Desire of the humble, he hears their Cry,* Psal. cxlix. *The Righteous is compassed with many Evils, but the Lord will deliver him from them all,* Ps. xxxiv. *Call upon me in the Day of thy Distress, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me,* Psal. lviii. When a poor Subject is courted and visited by his Prince, in the time of his Sicknes, he looks upon it as a great Favour, and an Happiness indeed: And when we enjoy the Presence of a dear Friend, whom we desir'd to see, in the midst of our most grievous Pains, we are wont to say, *Metinks I*

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feel no more Pain, now that I have the Satisfaction of your good Company. Now the Glory of God's Majesty accompanies the Tenderneſs of his Love. He is the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, who comforts us in all our Afflictions. He is like that faithful Friend who never forſakes us. For in our greateſt Calamities he ſuccours us, *Prov. xviii.* He is the King of Kings, and yet our moſt cordial and ſincere Friend, who frequently viſits the Houſes of Sorrow, and is near to every broken and bruised Heart, *Pſal. xxxiv.* The more we are oppreſſed with Evil, the more he remembers us, *Pſal. cxxxvi.*

Notwithſtanding our Childrens Imperfections and Miſcarriages, we cannot ſuffer to ſee them in Diſtreſs, but are moved with Compaſſion, and perſuaded to help them according to our Ability; and ſhall thy God who loves thee more ſincerely, and more cordially than the beſt of Fathers, and the moſt tender-hearted Mothers do their Children, forſake thee in the Day of Affliction? This merciful and loving Father, who did take thee into his Protection, when thou didſt enter into the World, and who ſince hath furniſhed plentifully to all thy Neceſſities; ſhall he deny his gracious Aſſiſtance now in the time of this thy Calamity? He who hath fulfilled his Praise by thy Mouth, when thou didſt ſuck at thy Mother's Breſt; who hath crowned thy youthful Days with his Divine Bleſſings, will not forſake thee now in thine old-Age. He will not caſt thee off in the laſt Moments of thy Life, when thy Strength is decayed, and thou art ſcarce able to help thyſelf.

When we offer any Aſſiſtance to our ſick or wounded Friends, we labour to leſſen their Pain; we employ all our Skill, and diſcover our moſt excellent Secrets; at leaſt, we endeavour to make them ſenſible of our diſpleaſure and grief for their Diſtemper, by our Sighs and Tears, and by all good Offices. Their Complaints and Groans are Darts that ſtrike us to the Heart: Likewiſe our merciful God is ſenſible of our Calami-

ties;

ties ; when he sees us oppressed with grievous Pains, his Bowels yearn, his Heart is as it were moved, and his tender Love for us is concerned. In all our Afflictions he is afflicted ; and whosoever toucheth us, toucheth the very Apple of his Eye, *Hof. i. Isa. lxiii.* He is said to weep and grieve at the Torments that we feel, and to be sensible of our Infirmities, *Luke ii.* He binds up our Wounds, and pours into them his divine Balm ; he cures the diseased Heart, and causeth the bruised Bones to rejoyce, *Job v.* He casteth into our Beds of Sickness his most excellent Perfumes, and drives from thence all Grief and Displeasure. When a pestilential Fever hath seized upon you, this Heavenly Physician can give you some Cordial Waters, powerful Antidotes, to keep the Poison from the Heart, *Jer. xxx. Psal. cxlvii. Psal. li. Psal. xxxiv. Cant. i.* His gracious Hand can drive from thy Soul the Venom with which the old Serpent labours to infect it. He will, in thy Need, clap upon thy Head, to thy Stomach, or rather to thine Heart, not a bleeding Pigeon, but the living and cherishing Virtue of his Holy Spirit. Only discover to him the afflicted and diseased Part or Member of thy Soul, or Body, and he shall anoint it with the Oyl of Joy and Gladness, that shall run down into thy Joints and Marrow. If thou feelest thy self weak or fainting, say to him, as the Spouse in the *Canticles*, *Comfort my Heart with Wine*, Chap. ix. and he will not fail to present unto thee the new Wine of his Kingdom. If thou art thirsty, ask of him some Drink, and he will give thee of that Water, *which if a Man drink, he shall never be athirst.*

My Brother, or my Sister, cast thyself upon God, for his Power is as great as his Love to thee. He understands better than thou or we can, what is expedient and good for thee. In his due time he will make thy Pains to cease, and will pull out of thy Flesh its incommodious Thorns ; either he will drive from thee the Spirit that afflicts thee, or accomplish his Virtue in

thine Infirmary. He will strengthen thee in such a Manner, and with such Patience, Constancy, and Faith, and fill thee with so much extraordinary Joy and Comfort, that every one shall visibly perceive, that God himself is thy Help, and that his Virtue sustains thee. O how sweet and pleasant is God's Assistance to a Christian Soul! It brings along with it so much Pleasure and admirable Delight; it causeth such undeniable Testimonies of our Predestination to appear; it gives us so many rare Foretastes of our celestial Inheritance, that St. *Paul* prefers it not only to all the Pleasures and Honours of the World, but also to his being ravished into the third Heaven, and to his seeing unspeakable Things, which cannot be uttered, 2 *Cor.* xii.

If Afflictions are increased with Christ, Joy and Comfort increase also with him. For as God commands Wine to be given to a Man whose Heart is oppressed with Sorrow, to drive away his Sadness, and bury his troubled Thoughts in Oblivion; so in the greatest Evils he supplies us with the strongest and most cordial Consolations. 'Tis on this Occasion that he declares his greatest Power, and pours out most plentifully his Divine Graces, *Isa.* iv. Tho' thou should'st walk through the Flames, the Fire shall not burn, nor touch thee: For as the Son of God was in the Furnace with *Daniel's* three Companions in *Babylon*; thus in thy most violent Fits of the Fever, in the midst of thy most grievous Aches, he will satiate thy Soul, and thou shalt be like a water'd Garden, *Dan.* v. or, as a living Spring of Comfort, that can never be stopp'd nor dryed up. Let the Storms and Floods beat against thee, let the Deflections endeavour to choak thee, *Isa.* lviii. thou mayest say with King *David*, *I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my Right Hand, I shall not be moved*, *Psal.* xix. Tho' I should walk in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, tho' I should have no other Help, nor Assistance in the World, tho'

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no more Strength remains in my Body, I would not fear; for, *O God, thy Staff and thy Rod will comfort me*, Psal. xxiii. God will not only draw near to thy sick Bed, but he will embrace and receive thee into his Protection, he will kiss thee with the Kisses of his Mouth, and make thee taste of the Sweetness of his Divine Comfort, *Cant. i.* He will cherish thee as a Mother doth her Child, to pacify it, and make thee so sensible of his Love, that thou may'st say with the Spouse, *His Left-Hand is under my Head, and his Right-Hand doth embrace me.* With his gracious Hand he will wipe off thy cold Sweat, and into his Bosom he will receive thy Sighs, and thy Groans; and thy Tears he will gather up into his most precious Bottles. And as when Drops of Blood fell from him, the Holy Angels appeared to comfort him, *Luke xxii*; so in thy greatest and most difficult Encounters, when thou shalt be at Handy-Blows with Death itself, his faithful Ministers, his Messengers, the Angels of the Right-Hand shall visit thee, to supply thee with Spiritual Comfort, *2 Cor. v. Rev. v.* And when these earthly Comforters shall fail, he shall send to thee some of those powerful Spirits that wait before his glorious Throne, *Dan. vii.* O good God, if we could but perceive the Things that are of themselves invisible, and if thou didst but give us Eyes, like to those of the holy Prophet, we should perceive Legions of immortal Spirits flying about in the Houses of Sorrow, with an intent to assist the Christian Soul, *Isa. vi. 2 Kings vi.* Finally, as the Sun with its Light, and the Strength of its Beams, drives away the thickest Clouds and comforts with its delightful Countenance the Face of the whole Earth; so Jesus Christ the Son of Righteousness, who carries Healing under his Wings, banisheth all Sadness with the Light of his divine Grace, *Mal. iii.* and with the Presence of his Holy Spirit expels away the most sensible Griefs, and fills us with unspeakable Joy, and with the Peace of God which passeth all Understanding.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Sick Person,
who desires to prepare for Death.

O Almighty and gracious God! the Author of Light and Darknefs, and the wise Disposer of Good and Evil, I acknowledge and adore thy Hand, that thou hast laid me upon this sick Bed, to punish me for my Sins. I cannot complain of thy Justice, but rather I reverence thy Wisdom and Goodness. For I have deserved a severer Treatment at thine Hands, having abused thy Mercies, and misemployed my Strength and Health in pursuing after worldly Vanities and carnal Pleasures, more earnestly than after thy Glory or mine own Salvation. For which Neglect I am heartily sorry, and repent, and could willingly water this Couch with my Tears. O my God! thou knowest that this my Grief proceeds from a sincere Displeasure for having offended so gracious a Lord, who now in this Correction discoverest to me thy tender Compassion, in that thou rebukest me not in thy Wrath. I take this Distemper of Body, as a Testimony of thy paternal Love and Care, since this is thine ordinary Method of dealing with thy dearest Children. I doubt not but it will prove to mine eternal Advantage, in Regard thou hast promised that all Things shall work together for Good to them that love thee. I am willing to suffer these Pains and Aches, so that they may advance thy Glory and my Salvation. I refer myself to thy wise Disposal; thou knowest what is most expedient for me; and I am sensible of thy Power to restore me to Life, and rescue me out of the Grave. Thy Blessing alone is able to give a healing Virtue to all these Potions, Medicines, and Receipts administered to me; but if it be thy Pleasure to continue this Disease, continue to me, I beseech thee, O my Redeemer! the inward Comforts and Assistances of thine Holy Spirit. Increase my Patience, Faith, and Humility, that I may submit to thy sacred Will. Remove from me all the Grief and Displeasure that renders me uneasy, and fill my Soul

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Soul with thy Peace, Joy, and Love; that now being separated from the Society of Men, I may lift up my Heart and Mind unto thee, my God! and withdraw them from these lower Vanities. Grant that I may employ these few Moments that thou affordest me, to prepare for my Departure, to take a Review of my former sinful Life, to beg Pardon, and repent, and to trust upon thine eternal Mercy by a lively Faith, that I may lay bold on thy Salvation, and be able to say with David, My Soul shall be satisfy'd as with Marrow and Fatness, and my Mouth shall praise thee with joyful Lips, when I remember thee upon my Bed, and meditate on thee in the Night-Watch. My Sicknes seems tedious, but my Sins have continued longer, and all this bodily Pain and Grief is nothing in comparison of the Happiness that I expect in Heaven. For what are those momentary Sufferings in Respect of the everlasting Joys? Grant, I beseech thee, that this Distemper of Body may turn to the Health and Safety of my Soul, and may oblige me to consecrate the Residue of my Life to thy Service and to thy Glory; that I may be wean'd from the World, and resign myself into thine Hands; that Christ may be gain unto me both in Life and in Death. But if it be thy Will to put a Period to my Sorrows and Sufferings by Death; here I am, O God! ready to obey thy Motion, and Will, without the least Resistance or Displeasure. For my troublesome Abode, undermined by Sicknes, causeth me to wish for my Departure. My Soul is willing to forsake this infirm Body; for thou hast prepared for it a more lasting and a glorious Dwelling above. This Couch where I am now stretch'd, minds me of the cold Grave where I must shortly rest, and this Death that draws nearer and nearer to me, will free me from this Chain of Misery, put an end to all my Grievances, and lead me out of this rotten Lodge, to introduce me into the glorious Palace of Immortality; where thy divine Majesty dwells, and where I shall for ever glorify thee in the Company of the holy Angels and sanctify'd Souls. Amen.

A Prayer

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A Prayer and Meditation for a sick Person tormented with violent Pains.

O Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort ! Look with an Eye of Pity upon my dreadful and sharp Sufferings. Thou piercest me thro' with thine Arrows, fillest my Soul with Bitterness ; thy Wrath is kindled against me, and thou increasest my Sorrows and Pains, both by Night and by Day. Sure, my Sins must be extraordinary and heinous, since they have provoked thee to deal so severely with me, who art Mercy itself, and art not willing to afflict the Sons of Men. O my God, consider my Weakness and Frailty, and let not thine Almighty Power, and the Fierceness of thy Wrath be display'd against such an infirm Creature as I am, a Worm of the Earth, Dust and Ashes, nothing in comparison of thee, O infinite Being ! Remember that I am related to thee in thy blessed Son, and am thine adopted Child, vouchsafe me therefore thy favourable Assistance, to put an end to my Sorrows and Sufferings, that are so excessive and extraordinary, that I could willingly speak as Jonas, Death is better to me than Life. For I am wither'd as parch'd Ground in Summer, and a violent Heat consumes and tortures me. O when wilt thou my God, who hast redeemed me from the Torments of Hell, rescue me out of these violent and bodily Pains ? I will give a Check to these indecent Groanings and Complaints, that become not such a sinful Creature as I am. Thou art in this most just and righteous, but I must cover my Face with shame and Confusion. For, were thy Punishments far more grievous, were I cast into everlasting Flames, I could have no Cause to complain of thy Severity, by Reason of my sinful Life. O my God ! my Sufferings are great, but not to be compared with my Saviour's, when the cold Sweat and Drops of Blood fell down from his precious Body. My Grief is violent, but not to be parallell'd with the Glory that thou hast promised to thy chosen Servants. O merciful Saviour ! thine heavy Hand shall never hinder

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binder me from trusting and hoping in thee. I am persuaded, that this severe Dealing is design'd for my Good and Salvation, and, in thine own Time, thou wilt take away from me this bitter Cup, that I may not drink up the Dregs. Nevertheless, not my Will, but thine be done. With this Affliction, grant me Grace and Strength to bear it patiently, and let thy Punishments be proportionable to my Weakness; and grant me a happy End and Issue, that neither Death nor Life, nor Pain, nor Torment, may ever separate me from thy Love, or pluck me out of thine Hand. My good God! forsake me not in my Distress, but comfort and assist me, and put an End to this bitter Affliction. I am fainting, and my Soul is weary within me, vouchsafe to me thy divine Consolations, the Cordials of thy holy Spirit. My Friends and Kindred grieve and weep for mine Affliction, but can give me no Assistance; Thou only art my Hope, thine Hand alone can relieve and deliver me from mine excessive Grief and Sufferings. Quench these violent Pains that consume me, and remove me out of the Reach of Misery. I cannot but long for Death, that will put a Period to my Torments; release me from mine Affliction, and wipe away all Tears from mine Eyes. O my God! when shall my Cryings and Groans be chang'd into Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving? When shall I be admitted to the Society of the Blessed, who are escaped out of all Tribulations, and have washed their Garments in the Blood of the Lamb? Draw me, and I shall run after thee, and glorify thee for ever in thine Heavenly Temple. Amen.



C H A P. XIV.

The Second Consolation against the Fears of Death, is to look upon God as a merciful Father and to trust upon his infinite Goodness.

THere is no Child well descended, but desires earnestly to see his Father's Face, and especially, the Face of a good and gracious Father. A great Prince's Son, who hath been brought up in a foreign Country, rejoyceth when his Father sends for him, to make him partake of the Glory and Dignity of his Empire. He is not then grieved nor troubled, he seeks not to delay his Departure, but rather embraceth, with Transports of Joy, the Messenger of such good News. He thinks of nothing but hastening his Journey: If he could borrow Wings, he would fly with an unspeakable Swiftnes to his Father's Palace. Now we are the Children of the great God, whose Throne is Heaven, and whose Footstool is the Earth. For our Faith, that looks upon Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Redeemer, considers God as our God and Parent. For to them, who have receiv'd this only Son of the Father, hath been granted the Privilege of being the Sons of God, to them who believe in his Name, 1 *John* i. So that we have just Cause to be transported in an holy Excess of Joy, with the Apostle St. *John*, *Behold, what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God*, 1 *John* iii.

We are by Nature Children of Wrath, as others; but God, who is rich in Mercy, hath predestinated us unto the Adoption of Children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his Will, *Eph.* ii. He gives us the gracious Assurances of this free Adoption in this Life. For as we are Children, he hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts, to cry, *Abba*,

Abba, Father, Eph. i. This Holy Spirit bears Witness with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God. If we be Children, then Heirs of God, and Co-heirs with Christ, *Gal. iv.* Yea, if we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him, *Rom. viii.* That we might be the Children of God, he hath not only adopted us by Jesus Christ, but also regenerated us with incorruptible Seed. We are not born of Flesh and Blood, but we are born of God. His infinite Goodness moved him first to grant us a being, and his incomprehensible Love hath inclined him to reform our Beings, and reprint his divine Image in our Heart, *John i.* *1 Pet. i.* He hath begotten us by his pure Grace, by the Word of his Truth, that we might be the First-fruits of his Creatures, *Jam. i.* *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively Hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead, to an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us, 1 Pet. i.*

Now tho' we be the Children of God, and the apparent Heirs of his Crown, our Glory and Dignity is not to be discerned during the Years of our earthly Pilgrimage. Our Heavenly Father suffers us here to live in a contemptible State in the Eyes of the World, that we might learn Humility, and long more earnestly for his celestial Inheritance. As it happens in a dark and obscure Midnight, Men tread under Feet Pearls, Diamonds, Sceptres and Crowns, as Dust and Dung; thus now that a gross Ignorance over-spreads the World, the Children of God, the most precious Jewels of his Crown, are esteem'd no better than the Scum of the Filth of the Earth. This Consideration causeth St. *John* to tell us, *Beloved, we are now Children of God, it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is, 1 John iii.* As *David* sent for *Absalom* out of the *Philistines* Country, and gave him Leave to dwell in the City of *Jerusalem*; but for the Space of two Years

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Years he would not suffer him to enter his Royal Palace, or see his Face: Thus God hath freed us from the Devil's Tyranny, and Hell's Power, he hath admitted us into his holy Church, which is as his *Jerusalem*, where he gives us a Fore-taste of our heavenly Peace and Reconciliation; but he delays for a time our Reception into the magnificent Palace of his Glory, and to the Enjoyment of his Divine Presence, our highest Satisfaction, and greatest Happiness. While we remain in the Body, we are at a Distance from God, so that we are saved, but by Hope, *2 Cor. v.* But when we shall depart out of this Body, we shall be with the Lord, and shall enter into a real Fruition of his celestial Inheritance, *Rom. viii.* Finally, while we dwell here below, we may see the Image of our Heavenly Father, and behold his Face as in a Glass; but when he shall admit us near his Throne, we shall see him Face to Face, we shall be transformed into his Likeness, and be fully satisfied with his Resemblance, *Rom. i. 1 Cor. iii. 1 Cor. xiii. Psal. xvii.*

Let Death be never so frightful and ill-favour'd, 'tis the Messenger of our Heavenly Father; and if we can have the Confidence to open its Iron Hands, and look into 'em, we shall find gracious Letters, full of Love, by which this Father of Mercy calls us to the full Enjoyment of our eternal Happiness. Death not only invites us to God, but it serves as a Ship to convey us thro' this tempestuous Sea of the World, to our Redeemer, who expects our Coming at the Haven of everlasting Rest. 'Tis like *Elijah's* Chariot of Fire that carried him up to Heaven, *1 Kin. ii.* If Death covers our Eyes with one Hand, and deprives us of the Light of the Sun, with the other it rends in pieces that veil which hinders us from the Sight of those Excellencies of God's immortal Sanctuary, and discovers to us the glorious Face of the Father of Lights. With the one it digs for our Bodies a Grave to cast 'em in, but with the other Hand it flings open, for our Souls, the Gates of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, to introduce them into the Banqueting Hall.

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Therefore Death should be so far from frightening us; that its Arrival should rather comfort us, and cause us to resolve to follow it with an holy Chearfulness. For we should not only be willing to go to God with Transports of Joy, when he is pleased to call us to behold his Face, and to eat of the Bread of eternal Life in his heavenly Kingdom; but of our own Accord we should be impatient to enjoy his glorious Presence, and in a continual Longing to see that happy Day that shall bring us to him, and satisfy us with unspeakable Delights. A true Christian should be moved, on this Occasion, with *David's Spirit*; *As the Hart panteth after the Water Brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O God: My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?*

I confess, that this great God, before whom we are to appear, is cloathed with Glory and Majesty, and dwells in the Light which no Man can approach unto, *1 Tim. vi.* I know that he sits upon a dreadful Throne of Fire, whereof the Wheels are like a burning Flame, *Dan. vii.* That Thousand Thousands wait upon him, and Ten thousand Millions stand before him, *Isa. vi.* I am not ignorant, that at his Presence the Earth is moved, the Sea and the Rivers dry up, the Mountains tremble, and the little Hills shake, the Rocks shrink, the Pillars of Heaven fall, and the Seraphims cover themselves with their Wings, *Rev. iv.* But let not this dreadful Majesty, and heavenly Pomp terrify thee, O believing Soul, for this Great God is full of fatherly Affection for thee. Round about this Throne of God there is a beautiful Rainbow, of a Green Colour, like to an Emerald; to signify, that God is reconciled, and that the Covenant of our Peace is to continue for ever. As out of this magnificent Throne proceed Thunders and Thunderbolts, that fright the Worldlings, and cast the proud Souls down to the Ground; so from thence proceed also Lightnings, and such refreshing Flames, as are able to comfort the Believer, and to direct him to his celestial Inheritance. We are related to God more

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than the Angels and Seraphims ; for we are not his Creatures and Servants, but also his Children, and the Members of his Son ; nay, we are one with him, *Job. xvii.* Let us therefore return our hearty Thanks to our heavenly Father, who hath made us meet to be made Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, *Col. i.*

Let us go with Confidence to Mount *Sion*, for there are no Signs of God's Wrath, nor of his just Vengeance to be seen. We shall find no Boundaries to keep us off from God ; but we shall find Assurances of Love to invite and unite us unto him. We shall see no Fire to devour and scare us ; but we shall perceive the comfortable Flames, which burn without consuming, and which bring Consolation rather than Fear. We shall not meet there a terrible Law-giver to drive us from him, to terrify us with his Thunderbolts ; but we shall meet a loving Father to embrace and open to us the Bosom of his tender Compassion. In short, we shall not hear there the terrible Sound of the Trumpet, that causeth the Rocks to split asunder, that flings to the Ground the proud Cedars, and makes the Deer cast their Young ; but we shall hear the sweet and melodious Voice, that will quiet our trembling Souls, refresh our languishing Spirits, and fill us with Peace and eternal Consolation, *Heb. xii.*

I acknowledge that God is just ; but he is also merciful, and his Mercy rejoiceth over Judgment. His Justice is like an exceeding high Mountain, but his Mercy may be compared to the bottomless Deep, *Psal. xxxix.* Therefore *Moses*, who had seen God more than any living Man, cannot be satisfied to extol and magnify his infinite Mercy, and the overflowing Riches of his Love, *Psal. xxxix.* He names him but once *Just*, but many times he calls him *Merciful*, *Gracious*, *Long-suffering*, *abundant in Goodness and Truth* *Exod. xxxiv.* 'Tis not unworthy of our Observation that the Words *Righteous* or *Just*, attributed to God often signify also *Merciful*, *Gracious* and *Loving*, in the
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holy Tongue. 'Tis true, God holds in his Hand the Sword of his Justice, but he is girded; and cloathed with his Mercy, as with a Garment. In short, God is not only good and merciful, but he is also Goodness and Mercy itself, 1 *Joh.* iv. His Compassion and Tenderness is far greater than that of the best Fathers and Mothers, as he himself declares by the Prophet, *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the Palm of my Hand, yea, in the Bottom of my Heart,* Isa. xlix. These fatherly Compassions force him to let fall the Sword of his Justice, as he tells us in Hosea, *How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine Heart is turned within me, my Repentings are kindled together, I will not execute the Fierceness of mine Anger,* Chap. xi. Therefore David had good Cause to be persuaded, *That though his Father and Mother should forsake him, the Lord would receive him.* If all Love, Kindness and Mercy, were totally banished out of the Earth; and all natural Affections should be extinct, my God will not forsake me while I live, and at the Hour of Death will receive me into his Bosom, and cover me with his Wings. Christian Souls, let not the sad Remembrance of your former Sins and Miscarriages discourage you. For when we appear before the Throne of God's Majesty, we must not trust upon our own Righteousness, nor be puffed up with the Fancy of our Merits; but we must place all our Assurance and Hope in the Mercy of God alone. We must imitate *Daniel*, who speaks thus of himself, and of his Proceedings, *We do not present our Supplications before thee for our Righteousness, but for thy great Mercies,* Dan. ix. The Compassions of God are our Merits. While God hath Store of Compassions, we shall not want Merits, St. *Bern.* Now God's Mercies and Compassions can never fail; they renew every Morning; his Faithfulness is very excellent, *Lam.* 3: *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no Plea-*

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sure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Ways and live, Ezek. xxxiii. I am he that blots out all thy Sins for mine own sake, and will not remember thy Transgressions, Isa. xlv. Though your Sins and Iniquities appear to you with all the deformity and ugliness of Hell, be not overcome with Grief, nor cast yourselves into Despair. Let us rather say with the Prophet Jeremiah, Wherefore doth a living Man complain, a Man for the Punishment of his Sins? Let us search and try our Ways, and turn again unto the Lord. Let us lift up our Hearts with our Hands unto God in the Heavens. Or, let us speak in the Language of Micah, Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and passeth by the Transgressions of the Remnant of his Heritage? He retaineth not his Anger for ever, because he delighteth in Mercy. He will come again, he will have Compassion upon us, he will subdue our Iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their Sins into the Depths of the Sea, Mic. vii. Let us comfort ourselves with the Words of the Prophet Daniel, To the Lord our God belong Mercies and Forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him. Dan. vii.

Tell me not again, I know that God is good and merciful, but my Sins are too many, to believe that he will vouchsafe me a Pardon, and have Mercy upon me. And after many repeated Vows, after many Groans, Sighs, and Tears of Repentance, I have return'd as a Dog to his Vomit, and as the Swine to wallow in the Mire, 2 Pet. ii. But wretched Sinner, learn for thy Comfort, that if thy Sins should be as many as the Sand by the Sea-shore or as the Stars of the Sky, Isa. xlv. If thou dost now sincerely repent of 'em with a contrite Soul, God will blot 'em out as a Cloud, and will cast 'em into the Sea. For God's Mercy has no Bounds, and his Compassions are infinite, Mic. vii. When thy Brother has offended thee, if he ask Forgiveness, the Lord commands that thou should'st pardon him, not only seven times, but seventy and seven times, Matth. xvii. How much more reason hast thou to believe, that God, who is Goodness and Mercy, will pardon thee more Sins, and oftner?

oftner? Therefore, instead of examining thy Miscarriages, accept of the precious Balm of his divine Consolations, and say with the Royal Prophet, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name; bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits; who forgiveth all thine Iniquities, and healeth all thy Diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender-mercies; who satisfieth thy Mouth with good Things, so that thy Youth is renewed like the Eagle's.* The Lord executeth Righteousness and Judgment for all that are oppressed; the Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to Anger, and plenteous in Mercy; he will not always chide, neither will he keep his Anger for ever; he has not dealt with us after our Sins, nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities; for as the Heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him; as far as the East is from the West, so far hath he remov'd our transgressions from us. Like as a Father pitieth his Children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, Ps. ciii.

Don't answer me, That your Sins are so heinous and abominable, that you cannot expect a Pardon. For if they be as high as the proudest Mountains, if thou art really sensible of their weight, if they make thee to sigh and groan, God's infinite Mercy, like a Deluge, shall cover and wash them away, *Lam. v.* or like a Torrent, it shall transport 'em out of thy sight; for where Sin abounds, God's Grace will super-abound, in case there be true Repentance, *Isa. i.* Tho' your Sins were as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; tho' they should be as red as Vermillion, they shall become as white as Wooll. All the Offences that you are guilty of since you were in the World, are finite and limited, but God's Mercy is infinite. O Lord, if thou shouldst mark Iniquities, who shall stand? But there is Forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared, Psal. cxxx.

He that hides his Transgressions shall not prosper, but he that confesses, and forsakes 'em, shall obtain Mercy, *Pr. xviii.* 'Tis certain, that there is no Sinner ever so guilty, that shall seek to God's Mercy by a true Re-

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penitance, but shall obtain his Request, *Psal. cxiii. David* hath defiled himself with an infamous Adultery, and imbrued his Hands in the Blood of one of his most faithful Servants; but as soon as he had made Request to God, with a broken Heart, and a contrite Spirit, his good and merciful Creator cleansed this foul Sinner from all his Guilt, at the fountain of his infinite Mercy. He made him whiter than Snow, and comforted his bruised Bones. This Consideration caused him to cry out, *I said, I will confess unto God my Transgressions; and thou, O God, hast taken away the Punishment of my Sin.* King *Manasseh* had been addicted to devilish Arts, and to the most abominable and heinous Idolatries, *2Chron. xxxiii.* Nevertheless, as soon as he sigh'd in his Chains, his Prayers and his Groans found a gracious Reception at the Throne of Grace. The poor Publican in the Gospel being ashamed to lift up his Eyes to Heaven, struck upon his Breast with this Expression of his penitent Soul, *God be merciful to me a Sinner,* *Luke xviii.* And God look'd upon him with an Eye of Mercy, and stretched out unto him his gracious Hand, so that he departed to his Home justified. The penitent *Magdalen* was inwardly grieved at her former filthy and debauched Behaviour, so that she came and cast herself at our Saviour's Feet, watering them with her Tears, and wiping them with the Hair of her Head, *Luke ix.* But Christ soon lifted her up with these comfortable Words, *Thy Sins are pardoned, thy Faith hath saved thee, go in Peace.* *St. Peter*, by Frailty, that should cause the best Christians to tremble for Fear of falling into the same Apostacy, denied his Lord and Master three Times, with Cursing and Swearing, *Mat. xxvi.* But this merciful God look'd upon him with an Eye of Compassion, and gave him Grace to repent most bitterly of such a foul Crime. I doubt not, but at the same time, that this wretched Sinner pour'd forth his Tears in God's Presence; he pour'd into his Heart the Oil of Joy and Gladness, and comforted him most effectually by his divine Spirit. Likewise, though your Sins be never so grievous

grievous and abominable, if your Souls be touched with Displeasure, if your Hearts be truly penitent, so that you shed sincere Tears of Repentance; in case you are heartily sorry for the want of a sufficient Grief for your Sins, in case you prostrate yourselves before your heavenly Father, he will raise you up again by his infinite Goodness, he will cast all your Sins and Transgressions behind him: He will cry unto you inwardly, by the Voice of his holy Spirit, *My Son,* or *my Daughter,* *thy Sins are forgiven thee,* John v. He will fill your Souls with an unspeakable Joy, *Luke ix.* and will cause you to sing with the Psalmist, *Blessed is he whose Transgression is forgiven, whose Sin is covered. Blessed is the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth no Iniquity, and in whose Spirit there is no Guile,* Psal. xxxii. Finally think not that 'tis ever too late to repent, and when Death is upon your Lips, that 'tis no Time to seek to the Mercy of God. As the Business of Repentance cannot be too soon, because we know not when God will call us to himself; 'tis most certain, that it can never be too late. For at what Time or Season soever the poor Sinner melts into Tears of Repentance, in case his Repentance be real, and his Tears proceed from a penitent Heart, God will always have the Arms of his Mercy wide open to receive him. The Thief crucified at our Saviour's Side, was at the last Gasps when he was converted, and when he uttered this excellent Expression; *Remember me, Lord, when thou comest into thy Kingdom,* Luke xxiii. Our good and merciful Saviour granted this Request, and encouraged him with the most excellent and comfortable Promise that could be expected, *Verily, I say unto thee, to Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* In like manner, when thou art at the Point of Death, if God speaks to thee, and awakens thy Conscience, 'tis an infallible Sign, that he hath Compassion on thee, and that he will not destroy thee. 'Tis a Sign that he opens for thee his Heaven, full of Light and Glory, and offers to thee his Paradise, with all its divine Excellencies. Doubt

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not, penitent Sinner, but that this is the acceptable Day, the Day of Salvation, and the Time of God's good Pleasure. Since this good God draws so near thee, thou may'st with Freedom draw near him: And since he beats and knocks at the Door of thine Heart, 'tis an infallible Token, that thou may'st also beat at the Door of his eternal Mercies, and that he intends to open and satisfy thee. In short, at what Hour soever we go to God, and appear before his Throne, he stretcheth out to us the golden Sceptre of his Favour, that we should obtain Mercy, and find Grace, to be helped in Time of Need.

Long and elaborate Speeches or Prayers are needless to persuade God to vouchsafe his Grace and seasonable Help in such an urgent Necessity. 'Tis not necessary that we should compose them, with the Art and Industry of human Wisdom. We need but pray to God, as unto our Father, and weep in his Bosom; we need but open to him our Hearts, and call ourselves his Children. That alone is sufficient to move him to Compassion, and to stir up his fatherly Affections, to appease his Anger, and to draw upon us his most excellent Blessings. The Prophet *Isaiab*, the most eloquent of the Men of his Time, seeks no other Argument to persuade God to have Mercy and Compassion, but this; *Look down from Heaven, and behold from the Habitation of thy Holiness, and of thy Glory, where is thy Zeal and thy Strength, the sounding of thy Bowels, and of thy Mercies towards me? Are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledgeth us not. Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy Name is from Everlasting, Isa. lxiii.* Likewise, after he had made this Confession, *We are all as an unclean Thing, and all our Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags; and we do all fade as a Leaf, and our Iniquities like the Wind have taken us away, and there is none that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee, for thou hast hid thy Face from us, and hast consumed us because of our Iniquities, Chap. lxiv.*

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He adds, *But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are thy Clay, and thou art our Potter, and we all are the Work of thine Hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember Iniquity for ever, behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy People.*

By this gracious and loving Title of Father, the prodigal Son is persuaded to be able to oblige his Parent to have Compassion on him; *I will rise, and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father I have sinned against Heaven, and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son; make me as one of thy hired Servants.* Thus, though we have forsaken our heavenly Father, mis-spent the Riches of his Grace, and lived a filthy and a prophane Life; nevertheless, if we can be moved with a serious and true Repentance, and say to him from our Heart, *Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and against thee, I am no more worthy to be called thy Son:* He will forget all the Miscarriages of our Youth, and will pass by all the Offences that we have committed out of Ignorance or Mistake; nay, he will blot out all our wilful and deliberate Sins; he will not only embrace us when we shall cast ourselves at his Feet, and in the Arms of his Mercy, but he will meet and receive us as his dearest Children. He will kiss us with the blessed Kisses of his fatherly Love. He will give to us his holy Spirit, that shall seal us for the Day of Redemption, and shall assure us, that we are admitted to the Liberty, and all the Privileges of his Children. He will shooe our Feet with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace, and will vouchsafe us all the Assurance of our entire and perfect Reconciliation. He will cloath us here upon Earth with Robes of Righteousness and Holiness, and in Heaven he will bestow upon us incorruptible Robes of Immortality and Glory. In this Life he will give us the Fore-tastes of eternal Happiness, and in the Life to come he will lead us by the Hand into the Banqueting-Chamber, and will cause us to sit there at Table with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, and with all the First-born, whose Names are written in Heaven. Out of this celestial A-

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bode, all Murmurings and Complaints shall be banish'd; but here shall be rejoycing and Gladness for the Conversion of poor Sinners, and for their Admittance into the Kingdom of Heaven. God himself shall invite the holy Angels and blessed Spirits to share in these publick Rejoicings, saying to them, *We must rejoyce, for these my Children were dead, but now they are alive; they were lost, but now they are found again.*

Let the miserable Slaves of the Devil, and of their filthy Lusts, tremble at the Approaches of Death, and let them look upon God as a dreadful Judge, *Rom. ii.* For our Parts, we have not the Spirit of Bondage to be again in Fear, but we have the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father.* Let the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*, who have no other being in Life, but that which they have received with their corrupt Nature, fly from God's Presence: For our Parts, we that are regenerated by the Spirit of the second *Adam*, will draw near to him with Boldness. We will not say as that Soul, disturb'd and frighted at the Consideration of its Crime, *I heard thy Voice, I was afraid, and hid myself,* *Gen. iii.* But rather, having been brought up in the Schools of the Prophets and Apostles, and having learned that we must prefer our Obedience to God's Will, to all other Things whatsoever; we shall say, to him, with *Samuel, speak, Lord, for thy Servant beareth,* *1 Sam. iii.* Or rather, we will address ourselves to him in plainer Terms, O my God, and heavenly Father, speak when thou wilt, for thy Servant is ready, and resolved to obey thy Command. We will not stay till God shall call the fourth Time, as that holy Man, *1 Sam. iii.* who because of his tender and unexperient'd Years, could not distinguish between God's Voice, and that of Man; but we will have our Ears, always open to his divine Orders, and at the first Motion and Summons of his Will, we shall be ready to follow him, as the Children of *Israel* were in the Wilderness, when they raised their Camp, and marched at his Motion, *Numb. iii.*

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And as when the *Levites* stopped, and put down the Ark in its Place, 2 *Chron.* iii. *Moses* uttered this Prayer, *O Lord, give Rest to the Thousands of Israel*; likewise, you believing Souls, whom God hath chosen for his Ark and Temple, as soon as you shall perceive the least Sign of Death, speak with an holy Confidence and Joy; Rejoyce, O my Soul, the Time of thy Freedom, and of thine eternal Rest approacheth. Here is the Messenger of good News. Here is Death that will usher me into the glorious Palace of my heavenly Father. Father, the Hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee, *John xvii.*

When the Hour was come, that our Lord *Jesus Christ* was to get out of the World to the Father; he said to his Disciples, who were grieved for his Departure from them, *If ye love me, ye would rejoyce, because I said, I go unto the Father; for the Father is greater than I,* *Joh. xiii.* *Joh. xiv.* Christian Souls, speak in this Manner at the Hour of your departing. If such as are about you happen to weep and lament, if they endeavour to move and stop you, by the Considerations of Flesh and Blood; say unto them, why are you grieved at my Deliverance, and at the End of my Misery? Why would ye hinder and retard my Glory and Happiness? O how cruel is your Love! How blind and inconsiderable is your Affection! Certainly, if ye did love me as ye ought, ye would prefer my Satisfaction, and the Accomplishment of my Happiness, to the small Advantages that ye gather from my abode with you. Ye should consider, that the least Part of the Joy that I shall feel in my heavenly Father's House, is a thousand times more worth than all the Pleasures of the Earth, than the Honours of the Age, and the Pomp and Glory of the World. My Friends, or rather my Enemies, let me go, for I go to my Father; I go to behold his Face, which is the most divine Satisfaction; I go to take Possession of that Inheritance prepared for me from the Foundations of the World, *John xx.* *Mat. xxi.*

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A short Prayer and Meditation for a Christian, who prepares himself for Death, by relying on the Mercy of God the Father.

MY God and Creator, I perceive by the Symtoms of Death, that my Departure is at Hand, and I am summoned to appear before thy dreadful Tribunal. The Remembrance of my former heinous Sins, cannot but terrify me, when I view myself, Dust and Ashes, and thine infinite Being and divine Perfections: When I compare my Weakness and Guilt with thy superlative Excellency and Holiness; how can I, who am but as Straw and Stubble, stand before a consuming Fire? If I should see thee, O my God! upon thy glorious Throne surrounded with Millions of immortal Spirits, armed with Thunderbolts, and encompassed with Flames of Fire, like to those of Mount Sinai, I should not only tremble for Fear, but fall into Despair, and fly from thee, as my first Parent, or as Moses and Isaiah, be dismayed and deplore my unclean Nature, not fit to draw near so holy a God. But O merciful Father! thy glorious Presence is not without some Tokens of Mercy. I see a Rainbow round about thy Throne, an Assurance of my Peace and Reconciliation. I dare therefore draw near the Throne of thy Grace, from whence thou reachest to me the Sceptre of thine infinite Goodness, and speakest to me in a Language full of Love and Compassion to comfort me, to revive my drooping Spirits, and fill me full of Hope and Confidence of my future Happiness and Salvation. Since therefore I see about thee, O my God! no such terrible Mark of thy Wrath, I will no longer yield to the Spirit of Bondage, that inclines to Fear; but will be persuaded by the Spirit of Adoption, to cry unto thee, Abba, Father. For I am thy Child and Co-heir with thy blessed Son, who hath reconciled me to thee by the Blood of his Cross, when I stood

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stood as an Enemy at a Distance. But now that I am so nearly related to thee, wilt thou refuse me mine Inheritance, purchased for me by my Christ? O heavenly Father! I know my Offences are heinous; and if thou didst treat me with Severity and Justice, I could expect nothing but the eternal Flames. Yet I am assured thou dost not delight in the Death of Sinners, and hast promised to accept of my penitential Tears and Amendment. And tho' my Sins be many and grievous; O let thy Grace and Mercy be magnified in the Pardon of them. I am persuaded that thy Compassion will receive and embrace me, as a Father his afflicted Child, and put far from thee mine Offences. Return then unto thy Rest, O my Soul! for the Lord is gracious unto thee, and is ready to admit thee into his eternal Kingdom. I understand therefore Death's Summons to be the Voice of my Lord and Father, who calls and commands me to come unto him. I will follow the Example of the prodigal Son, and speak in his Language; Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and against thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son. I confess, O my God! that thou hast not been sparing of thy manifold Blessings to me, but I have not employed them, as I ought, to thy Honour and Glory. The Temptations of the World have too much prevailed upon me, and my wicked Inclinations have drawn me away from thy Service, to gratify the Corruption of my Nature. In this sinful State that I am in, I fly to thee for Mercy and Pardon. Have Compassion on me, my heavenly Father, whose Tendernefs for me far exceeds that of the most tender-hearted Parents. I am fully persuaded, that thou wilt not reject me, but art ready to embrace and meet me on the Way, as the Father of the prodigal Son. O unparallel'd Love! O infinite Goodness and Condescension, I am confident to find in thee, my God, and to be a Partaker of it! I doubt not but that thou wilt quiet my troubled Spirit with a gracious Reception, cloath me with the Robe of thy Righteousness, and entertain me in thy glorious Palace, where I shall be admitted to solemnize the Marriage of the Lamb, designed as an Offering from
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the Foundation of the World, in the happy Society of Angels and immortal Spirits, where we shall glorify thee, and be everlasting Monuments of thine infinite Goodness and Mercy. O admirable Wisdom in disposing of thine Elect! We were lost Creatures, but we shall be found in God. We were dead in our Sins; but by Death, which we had drawn upon ourselves, we shall return to Life. We are cast into the most miserable State, but thereby we shall attain and be advanced to the highest Felicity. O my God! I recommend unto thee my Soul as to a faithful Creator; Heavenly Father, unto thy Hands I commit my Spirit. Amen.



CHAP. XV.

The Third Consolation against the Fears of Death, is to meditate continually on the Death and Sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to trust upon the Merits of his Cross.

IF we desire to die with a peaceable and quiet Mind, we must always meditate upon the Death and Sufferings of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and rest upon the Merits of his Cross. For the Death of this Prince of Life is the Model of ours, and the Fountain of Comforts and Joys of a believing Soul.

1. By looking upon this perfect Example, the wonder of Men and Angels, we learn to endure with an holy Resolution and Patience, all the Evils and Pains that attend upon Death, *Luk. xxii.* For tho' our Saviour's Torments were excessive, so that his Soul was *sorrowful unto Death*, tho' there issu'd out of his innocent Body a bloody Sweat, from the Violence of his Grief; yet out of his Mouth came not forth the least Sign of Repining or Impatience, *Isa. liii.* He was led to the Slaughter as a Lamb and as a Sheep before the Shearers is dumb.

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2. From hence we learn, that the last Hours of our Life must be employed in fervent and continual Prayers to God, since this beloved of the Father offers to him at such a time his Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying, and a Flood of Tears, as to him who was able to deliver him from Death, *Heb. v.* In the Bosom of this heavenly Father he poureth out all his Grief, and three Times he presents his Request, *Father, if this Cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, &c.*

3. We learn also to present ourselves before God's Divine Majesty with Humility, and to resign ourselves wholly to his adorable Providence: He who thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, he whom the Millions of Angels and Seraphims worship continually, judged it no Disgrace to himself to fall upon his Knees three Times to the Ground, and submit his Will to that of his heavenly Father. For after that he had said, *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass away from me*, he adds these Words, *Nevertheless, O Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt*, *Mat. xxvi.*

4. If at the Time of our Death, an excessive Sorrow, or a malignant Humour seize upon our Minds, and hinder us from seeing the Heavens open, or God who stretcheth out his Arms to receive us into his Rest; let us remember, that this merciful Lord speaks to us, as he did to his three Apostles, who slept when he was in his Agony, *Cannot you watch one Hour with me? Mat. xxvi.* My dear Children, 'tis not time to fall asleep with the foolish Virgins; trim your Lamps, put on the Garments of Light, to meet your Celestial Bridegroom, and to enter with him into the Marriage Chamber, *Mat. xxv.*

5. God requires that we should do as much Good at all times to our Friends as we are able, and to express the Sincerity of our Affections to those to whom Nature and Religion have caused us to be related. But chiefly at the Hour of Death we are more bound to this Religious Duty. Therefore *Jesus Christ* hath shewn

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shewn us an excellent Example ; for when he was nailed to the Cross, and ready to breathe forth his Soul into the Hands of his heavenly Father, he took Care of his holy and blessed Mother, saying to his beloved Disciple, My Son, *behold thy Mother*, and to her, *Woman, behold thy Son*.

6. We ought to do Good, and shew Kindness not only to our Friends, but also forgive our greatest Enemies, such as are the most enraged against us. For by this Means we shall follow the blessed Footsteps of our gracious Saviour ; for he had Compassion upon them that crucified him and mocked him. *Father*, said he, *forgive them for they know not what they do*.

7. By the Cross of *Jesus Christ*, we learn to put our Trust in the Goodness of God in our sharpest Pains, and to embrace him as our most loving Father and Redeemer, at that Instant when he seems to discover to us a severe Countenance, full of Wrath. For this eternal Son of God, in his most violent Tortures, when his heavenly Father withdrew from him his Aid and Assistance, and withheld the Effects of his Grace, the Expressions of his Love, and the Comforts of his divine Spirit ; yet he looked upon him as his God, and prays to him with an holy Assurance, repeating these Words *My God! My God!*

8. If we will die willingly, and leave these infirm Bodies with a joyful Mind, when the Time is come, that we must go to the Father of Spirits, we ought to remember with what Resolution our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ* prepared himself for Death, and how willingly he commended his innocent Soul into the Hands of God his Father, when he required it. *No Man taketh my Life away from me, but I lay it down of my self; I have Power to lay it down, and I have Power to take it again; this Commandment have I received of my Father*, John x. Heb. x. This caused him to speak in this manner, *Here I am, O God, to do thy Will*, Luk. xxiii. Therefore, when he gave up the Ghost, he cried with a loud Voice to shew that his precious Soul was not taken from

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from him by Violence, but that he willingly offered it up as a Sacrifice to God.

9. In this excellent Description of *Christ* crucified, we may farther learn, what should be our last Words, and our last Thoughts. For if God grants us the Use of our Tongues until the last Moment, we cannot end our Life more comfortably, than by such Expressions as our Saviour made Use of upon the Cross; *Father, into thy Hands I commit my Spirit.* But if we cannot move our Lips, nor pronounce these Words, we ought to have them inwardly in our Minds, and express 'em with the Motions of the Heart.

10. In looking exactly into the Death and Passion of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, we may easily find how much we are engaged to yield up our Souls to God, when he is pleased to call for 'em. For his blessed Death is the Price and Ransom that he hath paid for them. Now, if it be reasonable to render unto every one that which he hath bought and purchas'd with a great Price; and if it would be a great Injustice to refuse unto any Man that which he hath paid for with the Blood of his only and beloved Son, how can we refuse our Souls unto God, since they belong to him? Because he hath not only created them, and stamp'd in them his Image, but hath also purchased them with the Blood of his only Son, in whom, from all Eternity, he is well-pleased. We must not therefore imitate the Example of ill Pay-masters, or unjust Possessors of other Men's Goods; we must not expect, until our Souls be plucked from us by Violence, but rather like the good and righteous Debtors, we ought to return them willingly, and yield them up into his Hands, who hath paid for them an infinite and an unvaluable Ransom. *David* was of this Mind, when he said, *Into thine Hand I commit my Spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth,* Psal. xxvi.

11. From this Death and Passion of our glorious Redeemer, we understand not only our Duty, but also find sufficient Grounds of Comfort and Hope; and if may

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to say, 'tis in the Bowels of this dead Lion, that we meet with the sweetest and most ravishing Consolations. This Chief Priest who bears us upon his Breast in his heavenly Sanctuary, or rather in his Heart, will not forsake us in the Day of our Distress, nor yield us up to the Fears and Pangs of Death. For since he hath encountred with this cruel Enemy, since he hath felt its Stings, its Shiverings and Pains, and hath been tempted, as we have been in all things, Sin excepted; he is merciful and faithful, to have Compassion of our Infirmities; he is no less able to assist us in our Temptations, and to make us in all Things more than Conquerors.

12. Believing Souls, consider with me the noble Expressions of St. Paul: *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort, who comforteth us in all our Tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any Trouble, by the Comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God,* 2 Cor. i. These excellent Truths may be very well applied to our Lord Jesus Christ, whom the Holy Ghost names, *The Apostle and High Priest of our Profession*, Heb. iii. For the comfortable Assurances which he hath received from God, in the Time of his greatest Anguish, are precious Tokens, and infallible Assurances of God's future Help in our Need. For as when he was in his bitter Agony, when his Soul was cast down with a deadly Sorrow, an Angel from Heaven came to comfort him; so likewise, when we shall be engag'd in an Encounter with Death, when it shall endeavour to fill our Souls with Sadness and Apprehensions, he will, doubtless, send to us some of his good Angels, that be at his Right Hand, I mean, the faithful Teachers of his holy Word; or else he will send from Heaven some of his blessed Spirits that stand about his Throne, who are commonly employ'd in the Assistance of the Faithful. The Holy Ghost himself, the Comforter of afflicted Souls, and the true Oil of Gladness, will then drive from our Hearts

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Hearts all Grief, and revive us with his heavenly Comforts. He will not forsake us, till he has brought us to the Head-spring of eternal Joy and Comfort.

13. Our Lord and Saviour's Deliverance from Death, is in some Respect an Image and Assurance of our future Deliverance, which we are to expect from God's Mercy, and Almighty Power. For as when *St. Paul* saith, That this High Priest, in the Days of the Flesh, offered up Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears to him that was able to save him from Death, *And was heard in that he feared*; we are not to understand, that he was altogether freed from Death, but rather, that he had the Favour granted to him of swallowing up Death in Victory, and of triumphing over the Powers of Hell; and that thro' the Shame and Bitterness of Death, he is entered into his Glory, and into the Joys of his heavenly Paradise: Likewise, when we pray to God in our greatest Distresses, and deepest Sorrows, when we pour into his Bosom the Tears of a sincere Repentance; he hears us from his Sanctuary, and delivers us from Death, not by hindering us from dying, but by conveying our Souls through Death into an immortal Life; from Sufferings, into Happiness.

14. To be fully persuaded that God will not withhold from us the Joys and Comforts of his Holy Spirit, and that he will make us more than Conquerors of Death, by admitting us into an eternal Felicity; we need but cast our Eyes upon this great God and Saviour: For as he who grants a great deal, will not refuse a little; so God, who has not spar'd his only Son, but hath delivered him for us all, to an ignominious and cruel Death, how shall not he with him freely give us all Things? *St. Paul* hath taught us to argue in this manner, and to gather this necessary Consequence from God's Proceedings, *Rom. viii.*

15. When *Christ* our Lord gave up the Ghost upon the Cross, the Veil of the Temple was rent from the Top to the Bottom, Heaven was opened, and a re-

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penitent Thief was admitted. All this was to teach us, That we may enter into the Holy of Holies, by the Blood of *Jefus*, by the new and living Way, which he hath consecrated ; by the Veil, that is, his Flesh ; that this merciful Lord hath always his Arms wide open to receive us, and that he will never refuse the Glory of Heaven, and the Delights of his Paradise, to the greatest Sinners, who repenting, have Recourse to him by his eternal Mercy and infinite Merits.

16. The Death of this great God and Saviour is the Payment of all our Debts, and the Expiation of all our Crimes : 'Tis the healing of all our Diseases, the Freedom from all our Miseries, for it hath overcome Satan and the Powers of Hell : 'Tis the Death of an eternal Death, the meritorious Death that hath purchased for us Heaven and all its Excellencies, and procured to us a Right to God's Paradise, and to its Delights and Pleasures. In short, 'tis this Death that introduces Paradise into our Souls before we enter into Paradise, and fills our Minds with an heavenly and divine Peace, and an unspeakable and glorious Joy.

17. This Cross of our Saviour may be compared to the Wood which *Moses* cast into the Waters of *Marah*. For it takes away from the natural Death of God's Children, whatsoever is incommodious and bitter, and causeth us to relish Sweetness and Comforts that cannot be exprest. 'Tis like the Salt which the Prophet *Elisha* cast into the Waters of *Jeriebo*, to make them wholesome and fruitful : For it causeth that Death itself proves our Salvation, and brings to us unspeakable Comforts. I may also liken it to the Meal which the same Prophet cast into the Pot, of which the Sons of the Prophets had made this Complaint ; *O thou Man of God, there is Death in the Pot !* 'Tis the Death of Death, because it removes from it all deadly Poison, and causeth us to relish Angelical Satisfactions. I may therefore say of this glorious Cross, That 'tis the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil* ; because it makes known and understood the dreadful Evils from which

we are delivered, and the infinite Advantages which are procured to us by Christ's Death. I may call it also the *Tree of Life*, for every one that gathers of the Fruits of this Tree with the Hand of Faith and eats of it, shall live for ever, *John vi.* Believing Souls, 'tis that mystical Ladder which *Jacob* saw in a Vision, for it unites Heaven and Earth, sinful Man with his God, *Gen. xxviii.* It pleased the Father to make Peace by the Blood of his Son crucified, and to reconcile all Things to himself, whether they be Things in Earth, or Things in Heaven, *Coloss. i.* 'Tis by the Means of this blessed Cross that the good Angels are sent to our Assistance, and that all the Graces and Blessings of God are procured to us. By this Cross we shall ascend up to God, and to his eternal Happiness. Under the Shadow of this divine Cross our Souls rest, and enjoy the Peace of God which passeth all Understanding. 'Tis like the golden Sceptre which King *Ahasuerus* stretched out unto *Esther*. For if we touch this precious Cross with the Hand of Faith, if we embrace it with a contrite Soul, we shall obtain from the King of Kings, not only the half Part, but all his Kingdom, with all its Delights, Honours and Advantages.

18. *Moses's* Rod was changed into a Serpent, and so were the Rods of *Pharaoh's* Magicians; but his Serpent devoured all the rest. Thus the Death of the Lord and Saviour is accompanied with Sorrow, Fear and Anguish; but these Fears swallow up all other Fears, and cause us to draw near with Confidence to the Throne of Grace. His Sorrows drive away all our Griefs, and fill us with Joy and eternal Comfort. His Anguish gives Ease and Satisfaction to our Souls. His troubled Mind is the Cause of the Settlement of our Consciences. His Drops of Blood wash away our Tears. His Groans hinder us from Sighing, and his strong Crying causes us to sing with Joy. The Fetters of this glorious Redeemer have purchased our Freedom; and his Condemnation our Absolution. He hath been content to drink Vinegar mingled with Gall, and to swallow the very Dregs of

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the Cup of God's Wrath and Justice, that he might cause us to drink of the Rivers of his divine Pleasure. He cried out in the Violence of his Grief, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Math. xxvii. that God might never forsake us, and that in our greatest Troubles we might have always his fatherly and powerful Assistance ready at Hand, he stooped down his Head to raise our Hopes. In short, He died, that he might deliver them, who, through fear of Death, were all their Life-time subject to a cruel and unsufferable Bondage, *Heb. ii.* So that all such as tremble and are afraid at the Approaches of Death, have not yet felt the Power and Efficacy of the Cross of our Lord *Jesus*. They trample under Foot the Blood of the Son of God, and as much as in them lies they render the Fruits and Efficacy of this Blessed Death of no Effect.

19. Consider well, Christian Souls, and imprint into your Minds this Lesson; Remember that Death is never to be feared, but when 'tis attended with God's Wrath, and the Curse of his Law; when our Sins and Offences have supplied it with offensive Weapons; when the Devil who seeks to devour us as a roaring Lion, follows Death at the Heels; and when, at the same time, Hell opens its infernal Jaws to swallow us up. But those who have placed their Faith and Hope in the Death and Passion of the Saviour of the World, and who embrace his Cross, are exempted from all its Fears, and out of the Reach of all its poisonous Darts.

20. My beloved Souls, be not therefore frightened to see the Face of the great Judge of the World, *1 Tim. ii.* because we have such an Excellent Mediator between God and Man, namely, the Man *Christ Jesus*, who hath given himself a Ransom for all, *Rom. iii.* He hath disarmed God's eternal Justice, and stopped the Proceedings of his Vengeance, For God hath appointed him from all Eternity to be a Propitiation by Faith in his Blood, *John v.* The Father judges

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no Man, but hath given all Judgment to the Son, as he is the Son of Man. There is now no Condemnation to them that are in *Christ Jesus*: Whosoever believes in him, shall never come into Condemnation, but is passed from Death to Life, *Rom. viii. Job. v.*

21. Fear no more the Thunderbolts and the Flashes of Fire of Mount *Sinai*; neither tremble when you hear its terrible Thunder, *Cursed is every one who continues not in all Things written in the Book of the Law to do them, Deut. xxviii.* For though *Christ's* Hands were nailed and fastened to the Wood, they pluck'd out of the Hands of God's Justice, his terrible Thunderbolts, and the Sword of his Vengeance. The precious Blood that runs down from the Wounds of this Divine Redeemer, quenches the scorching Heat of this consuming Fire and Flames. As at the Time of our Saviour's Passion, he had a Care of his Disciples, and therefore he desired those that came to take him, *If you seek me, let these go, John xviii.* Likewise he hath now a Care of all such as believe in his Name, to secure them under the Shadow of his Cross. He takes their Place, and for them he stands before God's Justice, saying, Since you have taken me to be their Pledge, and have pursued me without Mercy; and since I have sufficiently satisfied for their Crimes, and have tasted for them the most bitter and cruel Death; suffer them to enjoy the Freedom that hath been purchased at such a dear Rate. Suffer them to pass thro' Death into the Enjoyment of a blessed Life, which is the Price of my Blood, and the Fruit of my Victories. This merciful Redeemer hath put himself, of his own Accord, in our Stead, and hath endured in his own Person, all the Pains which were due to our Sins. He hath been struck with *Moses's* Rod, and pierced thro' with the Darts of the Law; he hath been made a Curse for us, for it is written, *Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a Tree, Gal. v.* But we are not only by his Means redeemed from the Curse of the Law, but we are also blessed in him, with all man-

ner of Heavenly Blessings. When we were without Christ, we were Aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, having no Hope, and without God in the World. But we who were far off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ, we have Access with Confidence by Faith in his precious Blood, so that we may go with Boldness to the Throne of Grace to find Mercy and Help in Time of Need, *Heb. iv.* Rejoyce therefore, Christian Souls, for you are not come to the Mount that might not be touched with Hands, nor to a burning Fire, nor unto Blackness and Darknes and Tempest, and the Sound of a Trumpet, and the Voice of Words; which Voice, they that heard, intreated that the Word should not be spoken to them any more; but ye are come unto Mount *Sion*, and to the City of the living God, the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, and to an innumerable Company of Angels, to the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling, that speaketh better Things than that of *Abel*: For *Abel's* Blood called for Vengeance against his Brother, *Heb. xii. Coloss. i.* But the Blood of Christ pleads for Mercy, Pardon and Forgiveness for them who were his Enemies in their Understandings and wicked Deeds. And if when we were Enemies, we have been reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, *Rom. v.* how much more now, that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his Life and Intercession?

22. Never fear the Devil, nor all the Powers of Hell, for, according to God's antient Promise, *The Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head*, *Gen. iii.* The Lord of Glory hath spoiled the Principalities and Powers, he hath made a Shew of them, openly triumphing over them on his Cross, *Coloss. ii.* By his Death, he hath destroyed him who had the Empire of Death, that is, the Devil; so that he hath crushed to Pieces this Red Dragon that devour'd whole Nations and People, *Heb. ii.*

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Rev. xii. As it happened when the Children of *Israel* looked up to the brazen Serpent set up by *Moses* in the Wilderness, they were perfectly cured of the Bittings of the fiery Serpents: Thus, wretched Sinners, who feel the venomous and deadly Wounds of the old Serpent, cast the Eyes of your Faith upon *Jesus Christ* crucified, and you shall be saved from Death, *John* iii. As when the Angel destroyed the First-born of *Egypt*, he had not the Power to meddle with the Children of *Israel*, who had sprinkled their Doors with the Blood of the Paschal Lamb; so the Devil, who destroys the Children of this World, hath no Power to touch those whose Hearts and Consciences are washed in the Blood of the spotless Lamb. And as *Pharoah* and all the *Egyptians* that followed him, were overwhelmed and drowned in the Waters of the Red Sea, *Heb. x.* which served as a Passage to the Children of *Israel* to their promised Land: Thus Satan and all his wicked Spirits are as it were swallowed up in the precious Sea of Christ's Blood, which opens to us a Way to the Celestial *Canaan*. Rejoyce ye Heavens, and you that dwell in them, for the Accuser of your Brethren is cast out, who accused them Day and Night before God, but they have overcome him by the Blood of the Lamb, *1 Pet. i.* *James v.* Christian Souls, resist the Devil, and he will fly from you. If he goes about as a roaring Lyon seeking whom he may devour, be not troubled at his Fury, nor at his infernal Power, for he is tied to a Chain that he cannot stretch nor break; he hath been overcome by the Lyon of the Tribe of *Judah*. Take therefore the Shield of Faith, that you may be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil, *Rev. vi.* and to speak to him with an undaunted Spirit, Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou hast no Part in me. I belong to the Lord *Jesus*, who hath paid my Ransom, who hath redeemed me with his Blood, and sealed me with his Spirit. The Gates of Hell have no power upon those who are built upon the Rock of Eternity, *Mat. xvi.*

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23. Let not your Sins cast you into the Abyfs of Despair, nor drive you from the Anchor of your Hope. For God hath so loved the World, that he hath given his only Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. They that are whole have no need of a Phyfician, but they that are sick, *John* iii. Our Saviour is not come to call the Just to Repentance ; such as are puffed up with a vain Conceit of their own Righteousness ; but Sinners, who acknowledge their Faults, and are sorry for them. The sacred Arms of our Redeemer that were stretched wide open upon the Crofs, are yet stretched wide open to receive us ; and from the highest Heavens where he dwells, he causeth these comfortable Words to be heard ; *Come unto me all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest, Mat. xi.* This merciful Lord is come to seek the lost Sheep, to save such as were perished, and to redeem his People from their Sins. As by one Man, Sin came into the World, and by Sin Death ; thus Death is come upon all Men, for they have all sinned : Likewise by the Obedience of one, we are become Conquerors over Death, *Rom. v.* and we have obtained the Gift of Righteousness and Immortality : 'Tis the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World, who hath made an Atonement for all our Iniquities, *John* i. For as the Ram that was caught by the Horns in a Thicket, was offered up to God as a Burnt-Offering instead of *Isaac, Eph. v.* Thus the true Lamb of God hath been offered up unto God upon the Crofs for us as a Burnt-Sacrifice well pleasing unto him. He hath born our Iniquities in his Body upon the Tree, and by his Stripes we are healed, *Isa. liii.* He hath born our Grievs, and carried our Sorrows, the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him. As *Aaron* put upon the live Goat *Hazael*, all the Sins of the People, *Lev. xvi.* God hath made him who knows no Sin, to be made Sin for us, that we might become the Righteousness of God in him, *2 Cor. v. Acts x.* Whosoever believes in him shall receive Remission of Sins in

in his Name. Therefore, rather than to run into Despair, as Cain, Achitophel, and Judas, let us cry out with King David, *O blessed is the Man whose Transgression is forgiven, and whose Sin is covered! O blessed is he unto whom the Lord imputeth no Sin*, Psal. xxxi. Or, let us burst out into St. Paul's Language, *Who shall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? 'Tis God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? 'Tis Christ that died* Rom. viii. Let us, therefore, embrace this crucified Jesus, and say, with the blessed Virgin, *My Soul doth magnify the Lord, and my Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*: Or, with the glorified Spirits of Heaven, *To him that hath loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his Blood, be Glory and Strength for ever and ever. Amen.*

24. Christian Souls, if the vast Number of your Sins come into your Remembrance, consider that 'tis not said, that the Blood of Christ cleanseth us only from a certain Number of Sins, but, *that if we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just*, that is, true and merciful, *to forgive us our Sins; and that the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all Sins.* Let them be never so numerous, drown them all, as so many hellish Monsters, in the Blood of thy Saviour. Take hold of this divine Jesus, with the Arms of Faith and Repentance. Wrap yourselves up in his Winding-sheet; repose yourselves upon his Cross, and rest secure in the Shadow of his Almighty Intercession.

25. But if the Heinousness of your Crimes fright you, take hold at the same Time of the Horns of this mystical Altar, and all the Powers of Hell will not be able to pluck you thence. Comfort thyself, sinful Soul, for there cannot be a Spot so black, or so deep, but the Blood of Christ is able to wash it clean away. There is no Crime so abominable, but the Sacrifice of this Lamb without Spot, that taketh away the Sins of the World, can make an Atonement for it. Let thy Sins be never so great, they have their Limits; but thy Redeemer's Merits are without Limits, and the Efficacy of his sufferings continues for ever. To assure thee of
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this Truth, and to encourage thee, he was pleased, upon the Cross to discover the Riches of his Mercy upon a wretched Robber, who suffered then by the Hand of Justice for his Crimes. As soon as he saw him moved with Repentance, he changed his infamous and painful Cross into a Paradise of Glory and Happiness, and filled his Soul with the sweetest Comforts of his holy Spirit. This merciful Redeemer is the same Yesterday, and to Day, and shall be the same for ever. Therefore, if thou art reckoned amongst the most filthy and abominable Sinners, if thou dost groan under the Burden of thy Sins, and art moved with Contrition, *Heb. xiii.* thou oughtest not to cast off thy Hopes and be discouraged; draw near with Humility to thy Saviour's Cross, and wash thyself in the Blood that comes out of his Veins. All the diseased Persons that entred into the Pool of *Bethesda*, were healed of all manner of Distempers, *John v.* Thus all spiritually diseased are cur'd in this divine Pool of all their Grievs. 'Tis not necessary to stay till a good Angel come from Heaven to move the Waters; for Christ's Blood is always fresh, living, and of the same Virtue and Efficacy. We need not fear that others should step down before us, or that the throng should hinder us; for a thousand Worlds may be all healed at the same Instant. Neither can we pretend that there is no Body to cast us into this mystical Pool, for our Lord will never refuse to admit you when you shall have been Bedrid eight and thirty Years; as the poor Man that was troubled with the Palsy. And when you shall be nailed to a Cross, as the good Thief, you may nevertheless dip yourselves into this divine Pool, and feel its saving and healing Virtue. It doth not only wash away the Filth, and heal all thy Diseases, but it gives also Life to the dead, and render the living immortal. Whosoever thou art that dippest thyself in this precious Blood, thou may'st say with the Apostle *St. Paul*, this is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am
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the chief, *1 Tim. i.* Howbeit I have obtained Mercy, the Lord will deliver me from all wicked Works, and will preserve me to his heavenly Kingdom; to him be Glory for ever and ever. *Amen, 2 Tim. iv.*

26. You understand therefore very well, believing Souls, that you have no Cause to fear Death, since all its Darts have been broken to Pieces, all its Armour hath been torn, and its Spoils appear so visibly upon Christ's Cross. You may see the Claws of this old Lyon, the Paw of this devouring Bear, the Teeth and Poison of this infernal Serpent; and the Head of this prodigious Dragon; you may see Death swallowed up in Victory, and the Prince of Life, leading it in Triumph. Follow then the glorious Chariot of this noble Conqueror, saying with the Apostle, *O Death! where is thy Sting? O grave where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, and the Strength of Sin is the Law; but blessed be God who hath given us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. xv.*

27. Therefore, when God shall draw near to you, under Death's Veil, be not terrified; seek not to run from him, and to hide yourselves from his all-seeing Eye, unto which darkness is as the Noon-day, *Gen. iii.* Though you are by Nature poor, wretched, blind, and naked, you have more substantial Garments than Fig-leaves, for you have the Leaves of the Tree of Life, that are designed for the Salvation of the *Gentiles, Rev. xxii.* The Leaves that shall never fade shall cover all your Nakedness, and adorn your immortal Souls. For 'tis the eternal Righteousness, the most accomplished Righteousness of our Lord Jesus, who hath been made unto us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, *1 Cor. i. 30.* 'Tis Jesus Christ himself who is named, *The Lord our Righteousness.* 'Tis the precious Garment of Salvation, the glorious Cloak of Righteousness mentioned by the Prophet, *Isa. lxi.* 'Tis the Wedding-Garment whitened in the blood of the Lamb without Spot, and the fine and bright Linen, which
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are the Righteousness of the Saints, *Ezek. xvi.* In short, 'tis a Garment, which will not only cover and adorn you, but will also heal all your Infirmities, and advance you to Immortality, *Rev. vii.*

28. If you come before your Heavenly Father with this perfumed cloathing of your elder Brother, *Jesus Christ, Gen. xxvii.* Or rather, if you be cloathed with him as with a Garment, *Rom. i.* you shall not only obtain the best and most advantageous Blessing, but you shall enter into the Possession of the incorruptible Inheritance, prepared for you from the beginning of the World. *For the Wages of Sin is Death, but the Gift of God is eternal Life, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. vi.*



A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian, who strengthens himself against the Fears of Death, by meditating upon the Death and Passion of our Lord *Jesus Christ.*

O Merciful Saviour! Who hast taken our mortal Nature, that thou mightest offer it up as a Sacrifice to God; vouchsafe me thine Assistance, and an Increase of my Faith and Hope, now that I am threaten'd to be devoured by Death. I embrace thy Cross and Passion as mine only Relief; I take hold of the Horns of this Altar, and claim an Interest in thy Suffering and Righteousness. How grievous were thy Torments, O blessed Redeemer! which made thee sweat Drops of Blood, required the Comfort of Angels, and drew from thee strong Crying and Tears. But thy Death was not as mine, or as the Departure of thine holy Martyrs, who went willingly to Execution with Expressions of Joy. Thy Death was an Atonement for the Sins of the whole World; but ours can yield no Satisfaction to the divine Justice; it
makes

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makes us capable of reaping the Fruits of thine eternal Compassions and Mediation. Thou sufferedst the heavy Strokes of God's Wrath, and tookest upon thee the Load of our Sins; but we, instead of this consuming Fire, quench'd by thy precious Death, perceive in our Death the Flames and Motions of thy Love. Instead of the Hand of thy Vengeance, we meet here with the Embraces of thy Mercy, ready to admit us into eternal Happiness. Death appears to us armed with our Sins, and the dreadful Consequences of Hell and Damnation. But I see all this Armour hanging upon thy Cross, as the everlasting Trophies and Monuments of thy Glory. Thou hast been pierced with the Darts of a cruel Death, suffered the terrible Thunderbolts and Curses of the Law! And thou hast drunk the Dregs of the Cup of God's Fury for our Sakes, that thou mightest conquer Sin, Death and Satan, and free us from the Curses we had deserved. O wonderful Saviour! Thou hast spoiled Principalities and Powers, shewing them openly, and triumphing over them in the Cross. How marvellous are thy Works, and worthy of the continual Admiration of Men and Angels! What extraordinary Benefits do I reap from thy Blessed Passion? thy violent Sufferings are Preventions of my Torments; thy Bruises and Wounds are my Safety and Cure; thy Fears comfort and settle my Mind; thy distressed Soul fills mine full of Joy; thy crying appeases the Troubles of my Conscience; and thy Drops of Blood wash away my Tears; thy Bitterness is my Sweetness, and thy Death my Victory, and thy Cross my Triumph. I shall no longer tremble at the Approaches of Death, since thou hast purchased for me Life and Immortality; and the Kingdom of Heaven is thine by a twofold Right, as thou art the Son of God and Heir of all Things, and as thou hast paid for it a valuable Price by thine infinite Merits. The first is sufficient for thee: By the second we have a Claim to this Kingdom, and shall possess it as the Fruits of thy Death and Sufferings. My Hope is in thee, O blessed Lord! Suffer me not to fail in my Expectations. I know that nothing impure shall enter into thine holy City, but thy Blood

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Blood shall wash and cleanse me from all my Sins. O glorious Lord! how wonderful art thou, and how precious is thy Death, the Attonement of my Crimes, and the Ransom of the whole World. 'Tis our Peace with God, our Reconciliation with Heaven, and with the Angels of Light. In a Word, it hath not only rescued me out of an Abyss of Misery, from an eternal Damnation, and the endless Torments of Hell; but it hath purchased for me Heaven and its Glory, and Paradise with all its unspeakable Delights. And the Method thou hast taken, O victorious Son of David! to accomplish this, deserves our Admiration. By thine own Death thou hast conquered Death; and by entering into its dark Prison, hast given to Death its mortal Wound. Thy Cross therefore to me is as Jacob's Ladder, where at the Bottom I may sleep secure from Sin, and the Fears of the Grave, and by it ascend up to the Throne of Grace to obtain Mercy and Help in Time of Need. 'Tis the Source of Sweetness, Comfort, Joy, and of the noblest and future Expectations. 'Tis a perfect Example to instruct me, how to die well, and how I ought to be prepared when I leave the World. Grant me Grace to imitate thee, to express to all my Relations that cordial Affection and Tendernefs which I find in thee, to forgive my greatest and mortal Enemies, to pray for my Persecutors, to submit with Patience to thy Will; to behave myself with Courage and Resolution, with Zeal and Affection for thy Glory. Here I offer myself to thy Disposal. My Soul belongs to thee as to its Creator and Redeemer; for thou hast ransomed it, washed and sanctified it, clothed it with thy Righteousness, and put it into a Capacity of entering into thine heavenly Sanctuary, and of appearing before the Father of Lights. Take it into thy Custody, O sweet Jesus, who hast been crucified for me, a wretched Sinner. Grant, I beseech thee, that I may for ever live and reign with thee in Glory, in thine eternal Kingdom. Amen.

C H A P. XVI.

The Fourth Consolation against the Fears of Death, is to meditate often upon our Lord Jesus Christ, in his Sepulchre.

M A N naturally abhors and hates the Sight of Graves. Some cannot pass by a Church-yard without expressing a Distate and Dread. Not only they who make their Abode in glorious Palaces and stately Dwellings, but also they who reside in poor Huts, or in pitiful Cabbins; they who are shut up in black Dungeons, or exposed to the Injury of the Weather, who have no other Covering but the Sky, can never think upon Death without Fear, when they call to mind that this Body must go into the Bowels of the Earth, and lie down in a stinking and noisome Grave.

If we will banish from our Souls this dangerous Apprehension, and needless Fears, we must consider seriously, with a religious Application, that we ought never to abhor the Earth, because our Bodies have been made of Earth; it hath been, as it were, the Mother from whence we proceed.

We must also consider, that 'tis the general Rule of Nature that all compounded Bodies must return at their Dissolution every Part to its first Principle. Therefore, as the Soul ascends up to its first Source, and returns to God who gave it; likewise 'tis no Wonder if the Body returns to Dust, because it proceeds from Dust, and God hath pronounced a Sentence in the earthly Paradise, which shall never be revoked; *Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return*, Gen. iii. Nicodemus enquired of our Lord Jesus Christ, *How can a Man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his Mother's Womb, and be born?*

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born? John iii. This ridiculous and improbable Conceit is proved in a manner to be true in this Occasion, for we must enter again into the Womb of the Earth, our common Mother, that we may be born again, and pass into another Life.

'Tis not amiss to consider often the notable Representations of Death, mention'd by St. Paul, in the xvth Chapter of the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*. For our Bodies are as the Seed which is cast into the Earth, that it might bring forth. *O Fool, that which thou sowest, is not quickened except it die.* It cannot flourish until it rots. The Students of Nature inform us, That the Generation of one thing is the Corruption of another. In this Occasion we may affirm, that the Corruption and Dissolution of this wretched Body, is the Means and Way that leads to a more glorious Generation. You that weep for the Decease of your Friends and Kindred, when you see them laid in their Graves, remember what *David* saith, They that sow in Tears, shall reap with Songs of Joy, *Pf. cxxvi.*

Consider, That Death is the Way of all Flesh, and the Grave is the last Retreat which God hath appointed for all Living. So that if we be loth to enter into the Tomb, we must desire Almighty God to grant us a Lodging by our selves, to change the common Course of Nature, or to create for us another World.

Now, the Sepulchre is not only the general Rendezvous of all Mankind, but 'tis a Couch where they rest after their laborious and painful Race. Therefore, when the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of the death of good Men, he saith, *They enter into Peace, they rest in their Beds,* Isa. lvii. For when he looks to the blessed State of their Souls, he tells us, that they are entered into that great and eternal Peace that reigns in Heaven. But when he casts an Eye upon their bodies, he saith, *They rest in their Beds.* For this cause the places appointed to bury the dead, are named *sleeping Places*, by the *Greeks*, to teach us, that they are fallen asleep, in Expectation of the great Morn, when

when God shall awaken them with the Sound of the Archangel's Trumpet.

Therefore, when *Jacob* was ready to give up the Ghost, he commanded his Son *Joseph* not to bury him in *Egypt*, *That he might sleep with his Fathers*, Gen. xlvii. Likewise, *Job* speaks in the same Manner, *I shall sleep in the Dust of the Earth*, Job vii. And God used this Language unto *Moses*, *Thou art going to sleep with thy Fathers*, Deut. xxxi. And to *David*, *When thy Days be fulfilled, thou shalt sleep with thy Fathers*, 2 Sam. vii. And when the Prophet *Daniel* speaks of such as were deceased since the Creation of the World, he saith, *They sleep in the Dust of the Earth*, Dan. xii.

Particularly take Notice, Christian Souls, that when God spoke to *Moses* from the midst of the burning Bush, he told him, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, Exod. iv. They had been dead many Ages before, nevertheless God names himself their God. Note, *God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living*, Mat. xxii. Those holy Men were not dead in Regard of their Souls, for they are immortal, and God had admitted them into eternal Bliss. Their Bodies alio, to speak properly, were not dead, but slept in their Graves, as our Saviour said of *Jairus's* Daughter, *The Damsel is not dead, but sleepeth*, Mat. ix. And of *Lazarus*, *Lazarus our Friend sleepeth*, John xi. Moreover, we may justly say, That the Condition of our Bodies in the Grave, is better, and more pleasant than our daily Sleep; for when we rest in our Beds, we are often disturb'd in our Fancy, we labour and sweat, and the richest and most magnificent Couches, are not free from this Evil; whereas in the Grave, our Bodies are at Rest, and secure from all Sense of Pain, and enjoy a perfect Sleep, and a Rest without Disturbance.

The greatest Princes and the proudest Monarchs are constrained to take up their Lodging, one after another, here in this House, which God hath prepar'd

for all Living, and to repose themselves in that Couch, which is to receive all the Sons of *Adam*. When the Sacred History gives an Account of the Kings of *Judab*, and of *Israel*, it adds at the End of their Life, *He slept with his Fathers*. Let us be never so wretched, poor and miserable, we shall be entertained in this Dwelling of Kings, and lay ourselves down upon their Beds; therefore when *Job*, through the Grievousness of his Pain complained, because he had not died immediately after his Birth, he saith; *For, now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept, then had I been at Rest, with Kings and Counsellors of the Earth, which built desolate Places for themselves, or with Princes that had Gold, who filled their Houses with Silver.*

'Tis in this House, and upon this Couch, that the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, and generally all the Faithful rest, who have lived in all the Ages of the World; as 'tis recorded of *St. Stephen*, when he had commended his Soul into the Hands of the Lord *Jesus*, that *he fell asleep*, Acts vii.. Therefore, when *St. Paul* reproves the *Corinthians*, and acquaints them, that God had punished them with divers Diseases, and Death, because they had profaned the Lord's-Supper, he tells them, *For this Cause many are feeble and sick amongst you, and many sleep*. And when he speaks of all those that were dead in the Profession of Christ's Religion, he saith, *They sleep in Jesus*, and he names them, *They that sleep*. Now, we are not better and nobler than the Saints, of Paradise, to expect, that our Bodies should receive a better and more favourable Entertainment than they.

In short, There is nothing more able to remove from our Fancy that Horror of our Graves, than the Consideration of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, who did enter into the Earth, like other Men, and laid himself down there. He hath sanctified and pertumed that Place with his Divine Presence, and hath
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made it the Object of our Desires and the Cause of our Glory. For there is no Subject but thinks it an Honour to lodge in his Prince's Chamber, and to lie down and sleep upon the Bed where he hath taken his Rest, tho' he hath remained there but a Moment, or an Hour. O blessed Tomb, where Death and Life, Disgrace and Glory are lodged together, and where the Prince of Life, the Author of all Honour and Happiness rested himself.

Christians, who desire to banish from your Souls all Fears of Death, and Apprehensions of your Graves, look upon your Sepulchres in the same Manner as if you should see there Jesus Christ the King of Glory, the Prince of your Salvation yet remaining asleep. When old *Jacob* heard the mistaken News of the Death of his Son *Joseph*, he was overcome with a violent Grief, so that he cried out, *I shall go down with Sorrow to my Son into the Grave.* But the certain News of the Death and Burial of our true *Joseph*, will fill us full of unspeakable Comforts, and will cause us to speak in another Manner; I shall go down to my Father into the Sepulchre with Joy. The Prophet *Elijah* raised to Life a Child which was laid in his Chamber upon his Bed; when he stretched himself upon it, the Soul that was departed came again. And *Elisha* raised another in the same Manner, by applying his Mouth to the Child's, his Hands and Eyes to his. But, believing Soul, God works for thee, on this Occasion, a far more wonderful Miracle, for our Resurrection and Life proceed from the Death and Burial of our great Prophet. If we go into this holy Tomb, if we lay ourselves down upon his precious Body, if we embrace it with a true and lively Faith, and a serious Repentance, he will quicken us again, and cause us to become immortal; for he hath been pleased to enter into the State of the Dead, with an Intent to procure us a Blessing, and a glorious Immortality.

A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian, who strengthens himself against the frightful Aspect of the Grave, by looking upon our Lord Jesus Christ laid in his Tomb.

O Wonderful Mediator between God and Man! Thou art God immortal, and yet hast vouchsafed to take upon thee our mortal Nature, and to die for me miserable Sinner, and to remain for a Time in the State of the Dead, that thou mightest procure to me a blessed Immortality. Give me Grace to meditate, as I ought, upon thy sacred Body, wrapped up in a Winding-sheet, and laid in the Earth. For, by this Means, O sweet Jesus, I shall be reconciled to the Sight of the Grave, I shall look with a stedfast and settled Countenance on the Pit into which I must enter, when thou shalt appoint it. For the Servant is not greater than his Master. It belongs not to the Creature to prefer itself above the Creator. Since I expect to share in thy Glory and Exaltation, 'tis but just and reasonable, that I take some Part in thy Disgraces and Abasement. My Reason, assisted by thine Holy Spirit, teacheth me, that I must be content to be wrapped up in thy Darknes, and remain with thee in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, since I hope to be cloathed one Day with Light, and crowned with an eternal Life. I must not only look upon the Grave without Fear; but I shall consider it with Joy, in Regard thou hast honoured it with thine Holy Presence, and perfumed it with thy Divine and Celestial Odour. I shall look upon it, as if thou didst yet lie down in it, as if I were to keep thee Company there, my Lord, and my God. A dead Man returned to Life again, when he did but touch the Bones of thy Prophet; but I do not only touch the Prince of Prophets, but embrace thee by Faith, as thou art for my Sins, and as resting in thy Grave for my Salvation. Thou shalt, therefore make me sensible

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ble of thy divine Virtue, put in me the Seeds of Immortality, and raise my Hopes up to Heaven. My Soul hath already a Share in the first Resurrection, and one Day this infirm Body shall return to Newness of Life. If my Resurrection be not so quick and speedy, as that of the Dead raised to Life by the Prophet, it shall be far more glorious and lasting, that I may bless thee with all thy Saints, and praise thee for ever, with thine Inheritance in Heaven. Amen.

C H A P. XVII,

The Fifth Consolation against the Fears of Death, is to meditate upon the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

AS there is nothing more grievous and unsufferable, than to behold a proud and insulting Enemy, who is always victorious, and whom none can overcome in his insolent and braving Humour; likewise there is nothing more pleasant and comfortable than to see such a Pride cast down, and to triumph over such an Enemy. Therefore the Children of Israel, who had long groaned under the cruel Tyranny of Pharaoh, sang with Joy a Song of Thanksgiving, when God destroyed that wretched Tyrant, and buried him and his Army in the Waves of the Red Sea. For this Cause, when the Red Dragon, the Ancient Serpent, called the Devil and Satan, *Rev. xx. 2.* who seduceth whole Nations, was overcome, and cast down from Heaven to the Earth; there were Songs of Joy and Gladness heard in Heaven, *Rev. xii.* Now is come Salvation and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Christ; for the Accuser of our Brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God Day and Night; therefore rejoice ye Heavens, and ye that dwell in them.

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From hence let us conclude, Christian Souls, as it was a grievous Affliction, and a sensible Grief, to behold Death tyrannizing over all the World, and shutting up in its Dungeons, Kings and Monarchs, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs, and generally all the Children of *Adam*, of what Condition or Degree soever ; likewise 'tis a great Comfort, and unspeakable Joy to us, to behold this cruel, and proud Enemy brought down, overcome, and disarmed, to see our Lord Jesus Christ marching out of Death's Fortifications, loaden with its Spoils ; rejoyce, therefore, ye Heavens and ye that dwell in them, for the Murderer of our Brethren is swallowed up into Victory.

We, who are the Members of this great Conqueror, have a share in this Honour and Glory ; in his Person, we are Conquerors of Death, so that we may say with the Apostle, *That God hath quicken'd us together, and raised us up with him.*

This Prince of Life, hath not only loosened all the Bands of Death, and broken to Pieces all its Chains, but he hath led away Death in Triumph, and made it subject to his Celestial Empire. He hath an absolute Power over Death, as he himself declares in these Words, *I am he that liveth, and was dead ; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and have the Keys of Hell and of Death.*

For it stands with Reason, that if this invincible Lord, when he was in the Prison of Death commanded over Death itself ; if he broke in Pieces its Iron Bars, and its brazen Gates ; if he caused the Dead to go out, and led them into the Holy City ; now, that he is out of the Grave a victorious Conqueror, he must needs command, with an uncontrollable Power, this dreadful Enemy which he hath already overcome, and brought under by his Almighty Hand.

O Death ! Fret and foam out thy Rage and Fury, I see that thou art tied as a Prisoner, to the Triumphing Chariot, of Jesus Christ my Saviour ; and I am certain

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certain that thou canst do nothing without Leave, and that thou canst not go a Step, unless he lengthens thy Chain.

As *Joshua*, when he had overcome the Kings of *Canaan*, called for his Captains, and spoke to them in this Manner, *Come near, and put your Feet upon the Necks of these Kings ; fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong, and of good Courage.* Likewise we may imagine, believing Souls, that our divine *Joshua*, the Conqueror of Death, calls to us from Heaven. Tread upon this wretched Death with Boldness, fear not, nor be dismayed.

The Children of *Israel* who trembled at the Threatnings of *Goliath*, were freed from all Apprehensions, when they saw him fall with a Stone from *David's* Sling, so that the most timourous could have freely put their Feet upon his Neck. And shall not you, Christians, banish from your Hearts all Fear and dread of Death, now that you see 'tis cast down at the Feet of our true *David*, that great Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls? For, tho' it opens its Jaws, and foams out Flames of Fire, it hath, nevertheless, received the stroke of Death, and is at the last Gasp.

And as the Servant of *Jonathan*, the Son of *Saul*, dispatched and killed those whom his Master had cast down ; thus we need but pursue the glorious Victories of the Son of the King of Kings, or rather, we need but gather up the pleasant Fruits of his Conquests. For this Prince of Life that hath overcome Death for us, offers to overcome it also in us with the Weapons with which he arms us. In short, to speak properly there can be no Death for such as are incorporated in Jesus Christ by a true and lively Faith. For he that lives, and believeth in him, shall never die ; and he that believeth in him, tho' he were dead, yet shall he live, *John xi.*

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for the believing Soul, who arms itself against the Fears of Death, by meditating upon the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lord Jesus, who hast been fully declared to be the Son of God with Power, by the Resurrection from the Dead, and who livest for ever and ever, strengthen me in my Weakness, comfort me in my Sorrows, and drive from my Soul all Fears and Apprehensions of Death. O wonderful Saviour! I need no longer dread this cruel and proud Enemy; for thou hast broken all its Fetters and Chains, and hast overcome Death and the Grave. O glorious and triumphing Monarch! Shall I tremble before a discomfited and disarmed Enemy, whom I see lying under my Feet, and chained to thy triumphing Chariot? I need but follow the sacred Footsteps of thy Victory, and gather its excellent Fruits. If thou hast been able to deal with Death, when thou wast shut up in a Dungeon; if thou didst then bring down its Pride, and carry away its Poisoners; what may not I expect from thy Victorious and Almighty Arm, now that thou hast in thy Hand the Keys of Hell and Death? O most mighty and merciful Lord! Thou hast not only overcome Death for me, but thou wilt also overcome it by me, who am thy Child, and the Sheep of thy Pasture, whereof thou hast paid the Ransom. Thou art not only raised from the Dead, but thou art also the Resurrection and the Life. Thou art the Prince of Life, the Lord of Glory and Immortality; so that he that liveth and believeth in thee, shall never die; and who-soever believeth in thee, tho' he were dead, yet shall he live. Sampson's Act was admirable, when he slept until Midnight, rose up, and carried away the Gates of Gaza, upon his Shoulders, up to an high Mountain; but who would not admire thee, O invincible Nazarite! who having slept until the third Day in the Bowels of the Earth, didst rise again by thy divine Virtue, carry away the Gates of Hell, and make them to become the Gates of Heaven, and the En-

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france into the celestial Paradise. Let me die, since my Redeemer liveth, and intends to introduce me into an happy Life, purchased for me with his most precious Blood, and secured for me by his glorious Resurrection. Amen.



C H A P. XVIII.

The Sixth Consolation against the Fears of Death, is the Ascension of Jesus Christ into Heaven, and sitting at the Right Hand of God.

THIS indeed a great Joy and Comfort to behold a cruel and proud Enemy overcome and disarmed, and ourselves freed, by that Means, from the heavy Yoke of his unsufferable Tyranny; but our Joy would be turned into Grief, and our Comfort into Sadness, if we did but perceive, at the same Time, the Author of our Freedom, choaked with his own Blood, and breathing out the last Gasps, at the Moment of his Victory. 'Tis requisite to render our Satisfaction compleat, and perfect, that his Triumphs might be everlasting, and that he might be advanced to the highest Glory, and sovereign Empire. Now, there is no Enemy more cruel and terrible than Death. We have beheld it disarmed upon the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and perfectly vanquish'd and subdu'd by his glorious Resurrection. But if with the Eye of our Faith we look a little higher, to the glorious Ascension of our divine Saviour, we shall see the same Death bound to his triumphing Chariot, and this conquering Redeemer exalted above the highest Heavens, and sitting gloriously at the right Hand of God, we shall see him invested in an Almighty Power, adored by all Creatures. We shall see him commanding not only the Angels of Light, and the celestial Spirits that are about his magnificent Throne, but exercising Dominion also over this World, over Death, the Devils and Hell. Because he hath been obedient unto Death, yea, to the ignominious Death of the Cross, God bath

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hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee shall bow, of Things in Heaven, in Earth, and under the Earth, Phil. ii. And that every Tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.

Every Soldier shares not always in the Triumph of the General, and all the Subjects taste not of their Prince's Happiness; but as we are the Brethren of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Members of his mystical Body, we have a Share in his Triumph, and in the Glory of his Empire. Therefore, the Apostle St. Paul informs us, *That our Life, that is to say, our Glory and eternal Felicity, is hid with Christ in God.* In another Place, he tells us, in express Words, *that God who is rich in Mercy, hath made us sit in Heavenly Places with Jesus Christ.*

This glorious Saviour is gone to take Possession of the Kingdom of Heaven not only for himself, but also, in our Names, and for us. Therefore, he informs the holy Apostles, and all true Believers, *That in his Father's House there are many Mansions; I am going to prepare a Place there for you.* In the same Manner he speaks in that admirable Prayer, in the which he consecrates himself to God, for the great Work of our Redemption, *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me.* For the same Reason St. Paul tells us, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, for our Comfort, *Heb. vi. that Christ is gone into Heaven as our Fore-runner.*

The high-Priest of the Jews entered into the earthly Sanctuary, to present himself before God for the People, *Heb. ix.* Thus our Lord Jesus Christ is gone into the heavenly Sanctuary, to appear for us in the Presence of God. The High-Priest of the Jews carried upon his Breast and Shoulders, the Names of the twelve Tribes of Israel, but Jesus Christ hath engraven us upon his Heart, according to the Prayer of the Spoule in the Canticles, *Cant. viii. Set me as a*

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Seal upon thine Heart, as a Seal upon thine Arm, for Love is as strong as Death. The High-Priest of the Jews did cast off the Names of the twelve Tribes with the Robes ; but neither Death nor Life, nor Things present, nor Things to come, shall ever separate us from the Love of God in Jesus Christ, *Rom. viii.*

The royal Diadem that was put upon *Esther's* Head, never caused her to forget her People and Parentage. She was mightily grieved for *Haman's* Conspiracy, and the decree which he had caused the King *Abasuerus* to sign and seal with a Signet. I may likewise say that the Glory to which our Lord Jesus Christ is now raised, can never make him forget the People that he hath redeemed with his Blood. He is not unmindful of Satan's Plots, nor of the Sentence and Doom pronounced against us by the great Monarch of the World, and confirmed by his great Seal. His glorious Head may be crown'd with the Rainbow, but his merciful Heart is inflamed with Love for us. He thinks it no Disgrace to acknowledge us for his Brethren, and to pray God for us who sits upon his Throne, where thousand Millions wait upon him, and ten thousand thousands worship him. He is able to save to the uttermost all such as draw near to God thro' him, for he lives always to intercede for us. If the Father hath always granted him his Request, when he was in his greatest Abasement, can we imagine that his Intercession will be fruitless now, that he is ascended up to the highest Glory ?

From his Exaltation to Heaven, he beholds all our Encounters and our Strugglings with Death. He sees all the Enemies that assault us, and the Dangers unto which we are exposed. He is acquainted with the deep Malice and crafty Designs of the Enemies of our Salvation. He perceives all the Darts that they let fly against us. Therefore, he covers us with a Shield, and will not suffer us to be overcome by Temptation. He fulfills his Virtue in our Infirmities, and make us more than Conquerors. He hath an Eye always upon his Flock ; he holds his Sheep all in his Hand, and none is able to pluck them from thence.

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When he was upon Earth in his Agony, at this Word, that dropt out of his Mouth, *I am he*; John x. his Enemies fell backward; and when he was in death's Prison, he forced it to obey him. And shall not he, now that he is exalted up to the highest Heavens, in the Glory of his Triumph, have the same Command and Power over Death, the World, and Hell? When he walked upon the Waters, he cried to his Apostles, *It is I, be not afraid*, John vi. How much rather may he speak to us in this Manner, now that he sits upon the Throne, that can never be moved? Christian Souls, who tremble at the Approaches of Death, imagine that the Lord Jesus crown'd with Glory, calls to thee from Heaven; Fear not, for I call thee, and hold out unto thee my Arms, I that am thy Saviour and Redeemer, who have satisfied for all thy Sins with my Blood, and who have redeemed thee from the Curse of the Law, and eternal Damnation. I have disarm'd God's Justice, vanquish'd Hell, broken the Serpent's Head, and swallow'd up Death in Victory. I have purchased for thee the Glories of Heaven, and the Delights of Paradise, I have trampled upon the World, and all its Powers. I am worshipp'd by all the Church triumphing in Heaven, and by Legions of Angels that fly about my Throne. I will, therefore, send some of them to guard thee, and when thou shalt leave the Body where thou livest as a Stranger, they shall bring up thy Soul into this magnificent Abode of Immortality, whither I am come to prepare a Place for thee.

Without doubt, if the Anchor of our Hope is fixed within the Veil, that is in Heaven, where Jesus Christ is gone in as our Fore-runner, we shall not apprehend the most contrary and boisterous Storms raised against us, by the Prince of the Powers of the Air, who works with Efficacy in the Children of Rebellion. We shall tread under Foot all the Billows of this troublesome Sea, and thro' these swelling Waves we shall march safe to our divine Jesus. If at any Time we begin to sink, and that our Soul is frightened, this Almighty Lord,

Lord, who hath not only delivered himself, but is the Saviour and Deliverer of his Church, will speak to us as the Apostle, *O Man of little Faith, why didst thou doubt?* Knowest thou not that I command the Winds, that I can still the Waves, and drive away the Tempest? Knowest thou not that I have in my Hands, the Keys of Hell and of Death? When a Person is to go to a Place of Rest and Happiness, that he cannot pass to it, but thro' a painful and thorny Passage, he marches with Resolution and Courage, when a Friend of his is gone before, and stretcheth out to him his Hand to help him. Now 'tis not possible to attain to the Glories of Heaven, and the Joys of Paradise, but thro' the Passage of Death; a Passage very uneasy and grievous to our present seeming; but Jesus Christ, who loves us with an eternal Love, hath gone thro' this Passage before us. He is past from this World to the Father, he is gone to his God and to our God. And that we might go to him, he hath sent the Light of his holy Word to direct us, *John ii.* He vouchsafes to us his Staff and his Rod to comfort us, *Psal. xxxiii.* and stretcheth out the Right-Hand of his Almighty Power, to cause us to pass from Death to Life; *Where I am, saith he, there shall also my Servants be, John xii.*

When the Apostles went up to *Jerusalem*, and Jesus went before them, *Mark ix.* they were terrified and frightened; but we that go up to the heavenly *Jerusalem*, and tread upon the Footsteps of this mighty Saviour, ought to be full of Boldness and Christian Confidence.

This great God and Saviour reigns in Heaven, he commands in the Earth, the Sea, and the Deep, therefore we may die without Fear, and with an holy Joy. For, who would not rejoyce to enter into the glorious Palace of Immortality, where we shall see not only the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, the holy and blessed Virgin, with all the Saints of Paradise, but we shall see Face to Face, our great God and Saviour Jesus

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sus Christ, whom so many Kings and Prophets have desired to see, and hear? While we remain in these Bodies, we are absent from this victorious Lord; therefore, we rather desire to be absent from the Body, and to be with Christ. This Consideration causeth the holy Apostle to confess, *That his Desire was to depart, and to be with Christ, which was far better for him*, Phil. i. 23.

The Queen of *Sheba* left her Kingdom, and came from a Corner of the Earth to see King *Solomon*, who was but a Type of Christ, and who had but a little of his Wisdom and Glory; and is there any Treasure on Earth, any Honour in this Age, or Pleasure in this Life, that might hinder us from going to see our Saviour Jesus Christ? When he was in his Infancy, the Shepherds left their Flocks, and made haste towards *Bethlehem*, to look upon him; the wise Men came from the East to adore him; and if he were yet on Earth, we should undertake a tedious Pilgrimage to the Ends of the World, and part with our dearest Enjoyments to see him. But the little Village of *Bethlehem*, is nothing in Comparison of the celestial *Jerusalem*; and what is the Sight of the Lord Jesus in swaddling Clothes, lying in a Manger, and in the Arms of his blessed Mother, in Comparison of the Sight of a Christ clothed with Light, crowned with Glory, and sitting at the right Hand of God the Father, upon a magnificent Throne, worshipped by all the Angels, and the glorified Spirits. The Father of the Faithful was transported with Joy, when he saw in Spirit the Day of the Lord; and the Spouse in the *Canticles* was exceeding glad when she heard him knocking at her Door; and old *Simeon* was ravish'd above Measure when he beheld Christ in his Arms; how much more shall we be transported and ravish'd into Admiration and Joy, when we shall look upon him as he is now in the highest Glory, and rais'd to the most magnificent State, and when we shall enjoy him never to leave him again? When St. *Stephen* beheld the Heavens open, and Jesus Christ sitting at
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the Right Hand of God the Father, the Face became radiant as that of an Angel. Therefore how luminous and shining shall our Countenances be, when we shall enter into these Places of Light, and behold Face to Face this blessed Redeemer for ever.

When old *Jacob* heard that *Joseph* was alive, and reigning in *Egypt*, whom he had so tenderly loved, and for whom he had shed so many Tears, he was passionately desirous to see again this dear Son, and to be Witness of his Glory; *It is enough*, saith he, *Joseph is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die*, Gen. xlv. And what think you, believing Souls, when you understand that your true *Joseph*, whom you heartily love, lives and reigns above in Heaven, and that he is there worshipped by all the glorified Spirits? Do not you earnestly desire to see his Face, and to behold his Divine Glory and Happiness? This old Father was weak and feeble thro' Age, and oppressed with Grief, but his Spirit revived when he saw the Waggons that *Joseph* had sent to fetch him; and you, my Christian Brethren, when Old-Age and Sickness have weakened your Bodies, and Grief and Displeasure have undermined your Hearts, do not you feel yourselves revive when Death draws near, and you perceive with the Eye of Faith, the Horses and Chariots which Christ hath sent to carry you away to the Paradise of his Glory? *Joseph* received his Father and Brethren with Tears of Joy, and all the House of *Pharaoh* rang with outward Expressions of Gladness, With what Joy, with what Kindnesses and Love will Christ embrace us? What Rejoycing will there be in Heaven at your Arrival? It is not to be expressed but with the Tongues of Angels. *Joseph* fed his Father and his Brethren, but he never yielded up unto them any part of his Glory: Whereas our Lord Jesus Christ, who excels *Joseph* as much in Power and Magnificence, as in Love and Mercy, shall not only feed us with the Bread of his Kingdom, and

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give us to drink of the Rivers of his Pleasures, but he will also impart unto us some of his Glory and Splendor, as he promised to his Apostles, *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, Luke xxii. To him that overcometh, I will grant to sit with me on my Throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne. Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown in Life, Rev. iii.* Joseph's Brethren, notwithstanding his Dignity and Power became Slaves, but Jesus Christ will place upon our Head a Crown of pure Gold. Joseph could not defend his Brethren from Death, they all died one after another, and he also in his Time yielded up the Ghost: But Jesus Christ, who is risen from the Dead, dieth no more, Death hath no more Dominion over him; so that he lives for ever and ever, and will cause us all to become immortal. Therefore, instead of desiring, as Jacob, to live to go down into Egypt to see his Son Joseph, we should earnestly desire to die, that we might ascend up into Heaven, there to behold our Lord Jesus Christ, our Father and Redeemer. When Jacob embraced again this wonderful and beloved Child, in the exceeding Transport of his Joy and Love, he burst out into this Kind of Language, *Let me die, now that I have seen again thy Face, and that thou art alive.* On the contrary, when we shall embrace Christ in his Glory, when we shall behold his Divine Countenance, we shall speak in another Manner; My Lord, and my God, since I now see thee alive, and reigning in Heaven, I shall live also, and reign with thee for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for a Believing Soul, which arms itself against the Fears of Death, by meditating on the Glorious Ascension of Jesus Christ into Heaven, and his sitting at the Right Hand of God.

O Holy and Divine Saviour, I have often looked upon thy generous Behaviour and glorious Victories, to strengthen myself against all Apprehensions of Death; but if thou wilt render my Joy most perfect and accomplished, grant me Grace to meditate upon thy divine Triumph. As thou hast been engaged in many Encounters for my Sake, and hast vouchsafed to me a share in thy Victory, grant me also a share in thy Glorious Ascension and Triumph. As thou hast suffered for my Sins, and art risen again for my Justification, thou art also ascended up into Heaven to prepare a Place for me. Thou art willing that I should be admitted into thy noble and divine Palace; that I should be where thou art, that I may behold thy Glory, which thou hast enjoyed with God the Father, before the Creation of the World. O sweet and merciful Lord, what Cause have I to fear to go to Heaven, since thou art there seated in the highest Glory and Felicity, and stretchest out thy merciful Hand to receive me? Have I not good Reason to expect to be glorified in thy Kingdom, since thou thyself dost bestow upon those that serve thee, immortal Crowns and Sceptres? O great God and Saviour, thy Throne is surrounded with Glory and Splendor; nevertheless, I will draw near unto it with Boldness; for 'tis a Throne of Love, and a Throne of Mercy, unto which every penitent Sinner may come. Round about this glorious Throne, I see a Rainbow of Emerald Colour, that certifies me that thy Covenant is everlasting. When thy Glory and Majesty increased, thy Love for me was not diminished, and thy Compassion and Goodness were always alike. Thou art the same Yesterday, and to Day, and thou shalt always

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be the same for ever. Thou hast been pleased, for my Salvation, to lie in a Manger, and to be nailed to a Cross. Thou hast given thy Soul for my Ransom, and hast spilt thy precious Blood to wash and cleanse me from my Sins, and to mark me a Way that I might enter into thine Holy Sanctuary. In the midst of all that Glory and Light with which thou art now cloathed, thou hast not thought it a Scorn to acknowledge me for thy Brother, and for a Member of thy Mystical Body. 'Tis for my Sake that thou appearest before thine Heavenly Father; and 'tis for me that thou offereest up unto him Prayers and Supplications. O wonderful Lord, 'tis in thy Power to give me the Things which thou hast merited by thy Sufferings, and which thou desirest for me by thy Prayers and Intercession; for all Power is given unto thee in Heaven and in Earth. O Sovereign Monarch of the whole World, hast thou not made us this great and gracious Promise, When I shall be lifted up from the Earth, I shall draw all Men after me? And is it not for us that thou hast prayed in this excellent Manner; Father, I will, that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me? Since therefore thou hast left this wretched Earth, to go and reign above in Heaven, take unto thee my Soul, O wonderful Redeemer, and deliver it from this Valley of Tears and Misery. Cause it to understand at the Time of its Departure these Words of Joy and eternal Comfort, Verily, I say unto thee, this Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. Lord Jesus, draw me with the Cords of thy Mercy and Grace, and I shall run after thee. And in Regard I must of Necessity pass through Death to come to thee, the Prince of Life and Immortality, give me Grace to consider of it in the same Manner as the Prophet Elias did the fiery Chariot that lifted him up to Heaven; or as Jacob did the Waggon that carried into Egypt, to his Son that reigned there. This holy Father in a Transport of Joy cried out, Let me see my Son Joseph again, and then let me die. But when I shall

shall be ravished with an unspeakable and glorious Joy I shall speak in another Manner: Let me die that I may behold my true Joseph, the Soul of my Soul, the Light of Life, the Author of my Glory and Happiness. O sweet Jesus, I shall freely and willingly leave this wretched and infirm Dwelling to enter into thy Heavenly Palace, to behold thy Glory and Magnificence. O King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, when shall I hear that divine Wisdom that drops from thy Lips? When shall I see thee seated upon the Throne of thy glorious Majesty, where a Thousand Thousands wait upon thee, and Ten Millions worship thee? when shall I enter into the glorious Company of Saints and blessed Spirits that sing forth thy Praises, and cast at thy Feet their precious Crowns? O victorious Monarch, who art now in thy Kingdom enjoying a perfect Happiness, forget not thy poor Servant, be not unmindful of thy Son [or Daughter] who am now overwhelmed with the Sorrows of this miserable Life, and the Anguish of Death. Let not the Songs of the holy Angels, and the Applauses of all the glorified Spirits hinder thee from listening to my Sighs and Groans. O Almighty and merciful Lord, look upon me with the Eyes of thy Love, and reach unto me thine helping Hand. Send to me thine Angels of Light, to receive my Soul, and protect me from the Angels of Darkness that endeavour to destroy me, and to drag me headlong into Hell. Let some of those glorious Spirits that wait for thine Orders, and fly at thy Command, deliver me from Death, and carry me upon their Wings into thy Bosom. I see the Heavens open and Jesus Christ sitting at the Right Hand of God the Father. Lord Jesus receive my Spirit. Amen.



C H A P. XIX.

The Seventh Consolation against the Fears of Death, is our strict and inseparable Union with Jesus Christ, by the Means of his Holy Spirit and the First Fruits of our blessed Immortality.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ is not only alive, and triumphs in Heaven, but 'tis from thence our Life, our Glory, and our blessed Immortality proceed. For, as the Father hath Life in himself he hath also given to the Son to have Life in himself; and as the Father raiseth and quickeneth the dead, likewise the Son quickeneth whomsoever he will. So that we may not only say to him, as St. Peter, *Thou hast the Words of eternal Life*, John ix. But we may justly speak to him in David's Language, *With thee is the Fountain of Life, in thy Light shall we all see Light*, Psal. xxxvi. Therefore all those that are united and incorporated into this Prince of Life, participate of the Fulness of his Holy Spirit, and by that Means they become Partakers of Immortality and Happiness. Now by the Virtue of Christ's Death and Passion, we are not only made Partakers of the Fruits of his Sufferings, but we are united to, and incorporated in him; so that by that Means we have obtained not only the great and precious Promises of Glory and Immortality, which he hath purchased for us, by the infinite Merits of his Sufferings; but we receive the First-Fruits and Fore-tastes of our future Blessedness.

He that is lifted up and dwells on high, quickens the Spirits of the humble, *Isa. lvii.* He dwells in our Hearts by Faith, *Eph. iii. 1.* He pours into
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our Souls his holy and quickening Spirit: For because we are the Children of God, he hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts to cry *Abba*, Father, *Gal. iv.* Whosoever hath not this Spirit of the Lord Jesus, he is none of his. By the Means of this Spirit he dwells in us, and we in him; we become Members of his Body; and we may boast, that we are his Flesh and his Bones.

All Things that are most strictly united by Nature or Art, are employ'd to represent this admirable Union, *Job. vi.* which we enjoy with Jesus Christ, by the Means of his Spirit that quickens us, *Rom. xiii.* From hence are derived these Expressions of the holy Apostle, *We have put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, *Gal. iii.* And that *when we draw near to him who is the living Stone, rejected of Men, but lifted up, and of great Price with God*, *1 Pet. ii.* *We, like so many living Stones are built up together to make a spiritual House*: For the same Reason our Saviour informs us, *John xv.* *That he is the Tree, and that we are the Branches.* And St. Paul assures us, that if we are become one Plant with him, by the Conformity of his Death, we shall also be one by the Resemblance of his Resurrection, *Rom. vi.*

To express to us, that this sacred Union contains many Ties of Love, our Lord Jesus Christ is represented as our Brother, our Father, and our Bridegroom; therefore the Apostle tells us, that he thinks it no Disgrace to own us for his Brethren, in saying, *Heb. i.* *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren*; and also where he informs us, *Rom. viii.* *that God hath predestinated us to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the First-born among many Brethren.* And after his Resurrection, he speake thus to Mary Magdalen, *John xx.* *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my Brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your Father, and to my God, and to your God*, *Heb. ii.* Therefore this glorious Redeemer, shewing himself unto God with all

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the Elect, saith, *Here I am, and the Children which thou hast given me*, Hof. ii. And by the Mouth of *Hosea*, he speaks to his Church, and makes this Promise to her, *I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in Righteousness, and in Judgment, and in Loving Kindness, and in Mercies*: From hence 'tis, that this Church is called *the Spouse of the Lamb*, in the *Revelations*; and in the *Canticles*, the spiritual Union betwixt Christ and his Church, is expressed by a continual Allusion to a Marriage between a Man and his Wife.

And because our Meat and Drink are turned into our Body and Substance, Jesus Christ assures us, *That his Flesh is truly Meat, and his Blood is truly Drink; that he is the true Bread come down from Heaven, that gives Life to the World, and whosoever shall eat him, shall live for ever.*

But amongst all the Similitudes borrowed to represent our Union with Jesus Christ by his holy Spirit, there is none employ'd more frequently in holy Scripture, than that of the human Body, for there is not any more proper for us. All the Spirits that give Life and Motion proceed from the Head, and as soon as the Members are separated from it, they die. In like Manner, the Spirit that quickens us, and makes us become new Creatures, proceeds from Jesus Christ; so that whosoever is separated from this Head, he falls into Death and eternal Destruction. And as there are many Members, nevertheless they make up but one Body, because they are all animated with the same Spirit, and they are kept alive by the same Head; So there be many Members belonging to Christ's mystical Body, some in Combats yet upon Earth, and others glorified in Heaven, nevertheless they make up but one only mystical and spiritual Body; for they are quickened by the same Spirit, and receive all the celestial Influences from the same Head. St. Paul teacheth us this Doctrine in express Terms, 1 Cor. xii. *For as the Body is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body, being many, are one Body; so also is Christ; for by one Spirit are we all*
baptized

baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be Bond or Free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. Finally, because the same Spirit that is in our Lord, as in the Head and Fountain; and in the Church in general, as in the Body, which is quickened and moved, is also in every particular Member: The holy Apostle is not satisfied to call this spiritual Body of Christ and his Church, Christ; but he tells us moreover, that whosoever is united unto him, is made but one Spirit with him.

These and such like Representations, let them be never so lively and noble, are but dark Shadows and imperfect Images of our Union with Jesus Christ by his holy Spirit. For the richest and most magnificent Garment can never keep off from the Body Diseases, nor hinder the Approaches of Corruption that creeps upon it. There is no Foundation ever so firm and well settled, that can free the House built upon it from the Ruins and Breaches of Time and Weather. Altho' the Sap mounts up from the Root of the Vine, and runs into the Twigs and Branches, they wither at last, and are cast into the Fire. The rarest Meats, and the most delicious Drinks, can never make our Bodies become immortal; Death snatcheth away the Brother from the Brother, the Father from the Child, and the Wife from her Husband. The Stroke of the Sword can separate a Body from the healthiest and strongest Head; nay, without any such Violence, the Head dies as well as the Body, and the Spirits that run in our Veins are far from hindering the Corruption of our Bodies; for they corrupt of themselves and vanish away. In short, the strictest Unions of Nature and Art are dissolved by Time, so that all Things under the Sun are subject to Vanity and Inconstancy. But the Spirit of our Lord Jesus is the Principle of an eternal Life, and the Seed of an incorruptible Glory. Whosoever is united to him by this Spirit, nothing can separate him from Christ, neither Life, nor Death, nor Hell, nor the World, nor Things

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Things present, nor Things to come. Therefore our blessed Saviour could find nothing here upon Earth, nor amongst all the Creatures, worthy and able to represent this perfect and inseparable Union: He seeks an Image of it beyond all natural Beings, in the holy Trinity; that unchangeable Union, which was, which is, and which shall ever be, between him and God the Father. As we may see in his excellent Prayer, *John xvii. Father I pray for them all which shall believe in me, that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us, that they may be one even as we are one.* Banish therefore, from your Minds all Fear, believing Souls; for all the Three Persons of the most holy, most glorious, and most wonderful Trinity, are engaged for your Salvation, to bring you to your eternal Happiness. The Father by his infinite Wisdom hath found out a Means to reconcile us to himself, to satisfy his offended Justice and to declare the Riches of his unparallel'd Mercies. The Son hath purchased for us this great Salvation, by suffering the shameful Death of the Cross, and by spilling his most precious Blood for the Forgiveness of our Sins; and the Holy Spirit, by incorporating us into Jesus Christ, makes us Partakers of the infinite Mercies of his Sufferings, *Rev. iii.* That is the true Hyssop that sprinkles the diyine Blood of the Lamb without Spot or Blemish, to cleanse our Souls. 'Tis he that gives us the white Stone, where the new Name of *Elect* and *Believer* is written, *Heb. xii. Rev. ii.* Which none knows but he that hath it; he gives to eat of the hidden *Manna*, and of the Food of Angels, *Job. iv.* which the World knoweth not. 'Tis instead of a precious Ring or Jewel, by which our spiritual Bridegroom promiseth and confirms to us his conjugal Faith. 'Tis the Seal of the Living God, that seals to us the Covenant of Grace, and the Promises of Glory and Happiness made to us in the Gospel as the Apostle himself tells us, *Eph. i.* that now hav-
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ing believed the Gospel of our Salvation, *we have been sealed by the Spirit of Promise.* Therefore he exhorts us, *Ephes. iv. Not to grieve the holy Spirit of God, by whom we have been sealed for the Day of Redemption.* Finally, this is the Spirit that witnesseth with our Spirits, that we are the Children of God; *If we be Children, we are Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ,* Rom. viii.

Think not, Christian Souls, that I design to persuade you, that this holy Spirit of our Lord Jesus shall come and whisper in your Ears, or call unto you from within, that you are the Children of God, as the extravagant *Quakers* amongst us imagine. The Testimony that he gives to our Spirits, is a real and effectual Testimony, if I may so speak, for he regenerates us, and makes us become new Creatures; he gives a more certain Assurance of his Adoption, then if he did declare from Heaven, *Thou art my Child, and thy Name is written in the Book of Life.* As the Seal imprints its Image in the Wax, thus the Spirit of the Lord Jesus imprints in our Souls the Image of Holiness and divine Virtue. Now as the Figure that remains upon the Wax, makes us judge, without Dispute, what Manner of Seal made the Impression; likewise, when you find God's Image printed in your Hearts, acknowledge the Finger of God, and the Virtue of his Holy Spirit to have been there: For none can have the blessed Image but he must needs be the Child of God. The holy Spirit that gives it to our Souls, kindles in us the blessed Flames of holy Love, and produceth in us Tongues of Fire; he makes us speak to God with Boldness, as to our Father; and lift up our Eyes to Heaven with Joy and Gladness, as to the Place of our Inheritance. All the Goodness of this present Life may be, nay, will be lost at last, *Prov. xxiii.* Riches take Wings and fly away, like an Eagle; Honour vanisheth

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vanisheth away, as Smoak carried away with the Wind ; earthly Delights and Pleasures haste away as a Torrent, or the Waters of a River that slide along the Banks, and they end, at last, in a Sea of Bitterness and Sorrow. If by Chance these Vanities continue with the Worldlings, while they remain on Earth, *Psal. xlix.* they can continue no longer ; for they are stript of them at the Grave. Their Riches and their Honours are not buried with them, and all their unsettled Delights fly away with their Breath. But Death hath no Power upon this Spirit of Life, which is our true Treasure, our Glory and everlasting Delight.

Again, the true and lively Faith, that embraceth Jesus Christ our Saviour, shall cease ; and Hope, that considers the Advantages to come, shall one Day be abolished. While we are in this earthly Pilgrimage, we walk by Faith, and not by Sight, and while we are tofs'd up and down upon this dangerous Sea of the World, *Heb. vi.* we have need of the Anchor of our Hope, and to expect with Patience the fulfilling of that we hope for, *Rom. viii.* But when we shall come to our heavenly Country, we shall have no Need of a Staff to walk with, nor of a Shield to defend us, and to quench the fiery Darts of the Devil. When we shall be secure in the Haven of Eternity, we shall have no Occasion to make use of this Anchor, for our Hope shall be changed into a perfect Fruition. When we shall be in Paradise, we shall need no Wings to carry us up to God, but only to fly about his Throne, as the Seraphims. In short, we shall need no Looking Glass, to see the Glory of God, for we shall behold him Face to Face. All that we believe at present, without seeing, we shall then see, and believe no more. But the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, whom the World knoweth not, and cannot receive, is not given us for a Time, but to dwell in us for ever. As the Humanity, which our Lord took from us was never cast off, nor ever shall be ; thus the Spi-

rit which he hath given us shall never be taken from us. The Humanity which our Saviour united in the Person of the divine Word, hath been glorified by this eternal Union, but the Spirit which he hath united to our Spirits, by this gracious Union, is the Foundation of Glory, and of our eternal Happiness.

This Spirit of Life is not only the Seal of the Promises of God, but also the Earnest of our incorruptible Inheritance, reserved for us in Heaven. This is St. Paul's Doctrine, *Ephes. i.* for when he had said, *You have been sealed by the holy Spirit of Promise*, he adds, *which is the Earnest of our Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession, unto the Praise of his Glory.* Because this divine Spirit is the Seal of the living God, he is the earnest of our Inheritance. For this heavenly Image that it imprints in our Souls, shall be Part of that Glory with which he will crown us in his holy Paradise. Therefore, the Wisdom that is victorious in every Respect, doth not call this Spirit, a Pledge or Gage, but an Earnest. For tho' both be given as a Confirmation of Promises, and an Assurance of their Accomplishment, there is this Difference, that Men commonly take back again the Thing engag'd when that which is promised is done; but the Earnest remains always, and is Part of the Sum to be paid. As therefore, the Earnest which is given, is never taken away, but Men commonly add to it the remaining Sum promised; likewise our Saviour never takes away from his Elect the Spirit of Adoption, which hath been once bestowed upon them, but he increaseth its Graces and Advantages, until he hath raised them to the highest Glory, and most divine Happiness which he hath promised.

'Tis in this Case, as with the Sun, which as soon as it appears upon our Horizon, increaseth the Light more and more, until it ascends up to our Meridian: Or,

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Or, as the Streams and Rivers, which the farther they run, the more they increase, until they come to the Sea: Therefore, when our Lord and Saviour speaks of this Spirit of Grace, which such as believe in him receive, he tells the *Jews*, John vii. *He that believeth in me, Rivers of living Water shall flow from his Belly.* And to the Samaritan Woman, he speaks in this Language, John iv. *He that shall drink of the Water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the Water that I shall give him, shall become in him a Fountain of Water springing to eternal Life.* This was sometimes shewn in a Vision to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, Ezek. xlvii. by the Waters that ran down from the Sanctuary; for, at the first they reached no higher than the Prophet's Ankle-Bones; afterwards they rose up to his Knee, and then to his Middle; at last they increased in such a Manner, that they became a great Torrent, and a deep River which was not to be forded over, and which discharged itself into the Sea.

As *David*, in the beginning of his Reign, commanded but one Tribe, but afterwards, he enlarged the Limits of his Kingdom over all the Tribes of *Israel*, that small Portion of the Kingdom was not then taken from him, but only increased, and became greater: Thus it is with us during this Life, we have a small Part of the Kingdom of Heaven intrusted in our Hands; or, if I may so say, we have now some Jewels of the incorruptible Crown, which is promised hereafter. This Part shall not be taken from us, this bright Beam of our future Glory shall never be put out in the Life to come. We shall possess as much of this Kingdom, as we are able, and shall be clothed with all the Light and Splendor of the heavenly Glory.

But as there is no Comparison ever so just, but is wanting in some Respects, there is no small Difference

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ference in this; for the Tribe of *Judah* was the noblest and richest Part of the Kingdom of *Israel*; but that Part which our Souls enjoy at present, of the Happiness and Glory of the Kingdom of Heaven, is but a drop of Water, in Comparison of the Ocean; or, as a weak Ray of Light, in Comparison of the Sun, 2 *Cor.* xii. Therefore, the Apostle *St. Paul*, who had been ravished into the third Heaven, and who knew better than any Man in the World, what were the Joys and Glories of Heaven, when he mentions this Spirit of Adoption that God sends into our Hearts, he calls it, *Rom.* viii. *The first Fruits of his Spirit:* To teach us, that there is as vast a Difference between the Measure of the Gifts and Graces which we receive here below, and the overflowing Abundance which we shall enjoy in Heaven, as between some few Ears of Corn, and the whole Harvest of a Field. 'Tis like the small Quantity of Fruits which were brought to the Children of *Israel* in the Wilderness, compared to the great Abundance of all the Land of *Canaan*. 'Tis like some small Crumbs of the heavenly Bread, of which we shall have our Fill in the Kingdom of God; or, as some small Drops of that new Wine which we shall drink for ever in the heavenly *Jerusalem*.

Therefore, believing Souls, you may from hence conclude, that the Approaches of Death ought not to scare, nor fright you, because that you have within you the Principles of a Life everlasting, and the Seeds of a glorious Immortality, which cannot be taken from you. Jesus Christ does not only wait for you, and stretch out unto you his Arms, to receive you, into his Rest; but he himself is also with you, and will render the Passage more easy and pleasant to this new World, where Justice and Righteousness dwell, *John* xi. He will work Miracles, for your Sake, and if you believe, you shall

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shall see the Glory of God, *Joshua* iii. We do not only follow the Footsteps of this divine and true *Joshua*, but we pass over with him, and he passeth over with us, *Exod.* xix. We are not like the Children of *Israel*, that went through the River of *Jordan*, whilst the Priests held the Ark in the Middle of the River, but we may be compared to the Priests themselves, *1 Pet.* ii. that did bear the Ark of the Covenant, and caused the Waters to return back to the Spring again. For we are a Generation of Priests, and we bear in our Souls the Lord Jesus, in whom the Fulness of the God-Head dwells bodily, and in whom are hid all Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge. In short, our Souls return to God, the fountain from whence they came. Let therefore that heavenly Voice which was heard in the holy Land sound in our Ears, *Isa.* xliii. *Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy Name, thou art mine. When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the Flame kindle upon thee. And say with David, when I should walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I shall fear no Evil, for thou art with me; thy Staff and thy Rod shall comfort me, Psal.* xxiii.

It seems, the primitive Christians had a Design to shew us this Truth by the Picture of a Giant-like Man, wading through the Sea with a Staff in his Hand, and a Child upon his Shoulder. For this Giant is the Emblem of a Christian, who lifts up his Mind as high as Heaven. The Sea signifies the Dangers of this World, and the Fears of Death. The Staff represents Faith, that keeps us up in our Passage through Life and Death, upon which, when we lean, we worship the living God of Heaven and Earth, and the Child is an Image of Christ;

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Christ; therefore he that bears him is called *Christophorus* that is, *He that bears Christ*. *Cæsar* could not endure to see his Pilot tremble in a furious Storm at Sea, because he was in his Boat. We have far less Reason to be afraid, since we carry in our Hearts the great Emperor and Monarch of the World, the Hope and Comfort of *Israel*. *Cæsar* was as much in Danger as his Pilot to make Shipwreck, but our Lord Jesus Christ hath all the Winds at his Command. He can still the most disturbed Sea, and thro' the most terrible Death he can cause us to pass and arrive at the safe Haven of eternal Rest, and of a most happy and glorious Life.

When *David* shewed himself with a purpose to fight with *Goliath*, he spoke to this dreadful *Philistine* in this Manner, *I come unto thee in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the Armies of Israel*. But you Christian Souls, when you are to encounter with Death, you may say to it, not only I come to thee, in the Name of him who commands Legions of Angels, and all the Armies of immortal Spirits; but I come to thee cloathed with his Armour, strengthened by his Holy Spirit; and assisted by him in Person. For, Jesus Christ who has overcome Death for us, intends to overcome Death by us. We are the living Stones which he hath chosen of his wonderful Grace and Mercy, to bring down that proud insulting Enemy, which causeth all Worldlings to tremble, and cover their Faces with Shame and Confusion, *Judges vi*.

We have seen a *Samson* breaking in pieces, with an admirable Strength, the Cords with which he had been bound by the *Philistines*; and tearing also the Body of a young Lion, in which he found a few Days after; Honey most pleasant to his Taste. It will be much easier for us, when we shall be strengthened with the divine Virtue of the Lord Jesus, of whom *Sampson* was but a Type, to tear in pieces all the Cords and Chains of Death. We shall rent in pieces the Body

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of this old Lion, and when we shall search into his Bowels with a serious and repeated Meditation, we shall find the sweetest and most ravishing Comforts.

As when the Prophet *Elias* was carried up to Heaven in a fiery Chariot, he let fall his Cloak, with which *Elisba* separated the Waters of *Jordan*, so that he passed thro' the River on Foot : Likewise our Saviour Jesus Christ being ascended up above the Clouds, to the Throne of his Glory, he hath left to us the Cloak of his Righteousness; he hath granted us his Holy Spirit, that we might pass thro' the turbulent Waves of this tempestuous Sea of this World, by its divine Virtue, and that thro' Death we might enter into immortal Life.

And as the Death of our Lord Jesus Christ separated his Soul from his Body, although his innocent Soul and holy Body remained always united personally to his Divinity : In the same Manner, the Believer's Death disunites for a time his Soul from his Body, but it can never separate it from the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, that is the Soul of our Souls, and such an holy Flame that it can never be extinguished.

When the High Priest of the *Jews* put off his priestly Ornaments, he cast off at the same time his Breast-plate, where the Names of the Twelve Tribes were engraven, *Exod. xx.* Not only our Names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, not only our Pictures are printed upon the Palms of his Hands with the Blood of the Covenant, but we are as a Signet upon his Heart, *Cant. i.* so that we cannot be separated from him, any more than his Heart can be taken from him. His Love is stronger than Death, and his Embraces are Embraces of Love.

Ruth promised to *Naomi*, that Death alone should be able to separate them, *Ruth i.* But on the contrary, we may tell our Lord and Saviour, who is our Father, Brother and Husband, not only Death shall never be

able

able to separate us, but it rather shall bring us nearer to thee, and cause us to rest in thy Bosom, where we shall be for ever satisfied with thine heavenly Delights. Christians you need not fear Death, for you are not to be wounded by all its Darts, for you have been dipt in the River that springs to eternal Life. The Spirit of the Lord Jesus that is in you, is the Spirit of Life, the Beginning of Immortality, and the only Spring of eternal Glory and Happiness. Since the Breath of the Prophet *Elias* raised a dead Body to Life, the Spirit and Breath of the Father and the Son will be able to keep your spiritual Life from decaying; unless it be in Death's Power to stop the Breath of the Almighty, unless it be able to limit the Beams of Light and Glory that come from his divine Countenance; unless it can cause the Rivers of living Water that spring out of his Throne, to cease and dry up; 'tis not possible that it should cause us to perish, and render us miserable. Therefore you are certain of your eternal Happiness, while Jesus shall be the Author and Well-spring of Light, Life, Glory and Immortality; and that his Holy Spirit shall be victorious over Death and Hell; and you may sing with *David*, *I shall not die, but live and declare the Works of the Lord*, Psal. cxviii.

You are not only sure of this Glory and eternal Happiness; and you are not only entred into Possession of it by your Faith and Hope, but you begin already to enjoy it and its First-Fruits. For he that believes in Jesus Christ, is passed from Death to Life, and whosoever hath the Son of God, hath eternal Life. As the Prophet *Moses*, when he was in the Wilderness, saw not only afar off the *Land of Promise*, but he tasted of its delicious Fruits: Thus we don't only behold afar off with the Eye of Faith, our celestial Inheritance, but we taste, at present, and relish some of its blessed Delights. And as the Fruits brought by the Spies, were the same, and like to them that the

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Children of *Israel* fed upon in the *promised Land*: In like Manner, the Fruits that we relish in the Wilderness of this World, are Fruits of the Tree of Life, with which we shall be fully satisfied in Heaven. For, the Grace that God bestows upon us here below, by his divine Spirit, is the beginning of Glory, with which he shall crown us above. The same Light that shines upon our Souls on Earth, shall shine brighter for ever in Heaven. But whereas we look upon it, at present, as it were thro' a black Mist with much Imperfection, then we shall see it clearly without Veil or Darkness. The same Holiness, that adorns, at present, our Souls, shall be their Ornament and Glory; then it shall appear without Spot or Blemish. That same Peace of Conscience that preserves our Hearts and Senses, shall be without the least Disturbance. In short, the same Jesus that conceived in our Hearts, and that is formed and grown in us by Degrees, shall then appear in a perfect Stature, that shall want no more Increase.

As 'tis with the Sea, it enters into the Rivers before the Rivers can run to the Sea; in like Manner, God comes to us before we go to him; and Heaven enters into our Souls before we can enter into Heaven.

Aged *Simeon* waited patiently for Death; but as soon as he had seen the Saviour of the World, and embraced him, he ran to meet Death. He thought upon nothing but his latter End, therefore, he prayed to God most earnestly to receive him into his glorious Rest. O Christian Soul, how shouldst thou dispose and prepare thyself to die, since thou beholdest, with the Eyes of Faith, this blessed Redeemer, not wrapped up in Swadling-Clothes, but crowned with an infinite Glory and Light; he is not in thine Arms, but he lodges in thine Heart; thou hast not received him, to return, or part with him again, but to be united to him for ever, and to be incorporated into his mystical Body. Since therefore Death brings

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thee nearer to thy Redeemer, perfects this blessed Union, and casts thee into the very Fountain of Life; instead of being frightened at it, and grieved when it comes to thee, thou shouldst then rejoyce, and be transported above Measure with Gladness. We shall meet this Death with a chearful Countenance. I mean, that we should meet the Lord Jesus, this merciful Prince of Life, who having vouchsafed to thee the Sight of his Salvation, intends to receive thee into his Rest, and glorious Peace, who reigns above in Heaven,



A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian Soul, which arms itself against the Fears of Death, by meditating on our strict and inseparable Union with Jesus Christ, by his Holy Spirit, and the First-Fruits in us of our Blessed Immortality.

O Mighty and Merciful Lord, the Sun of Righteousness, and Fountain of living Water, drive away from me the dark Shadow of Death, and quench all the Fires that it kindles in my Soul. Thou hast not only died for me, but thou art pleased to live in me, that I might one Day live for ever with thee. Thou hast, of thy pure Mercy, chosen me for thy Child, and hast made me a Member of thy mystical Body, Flesh of thy Flesh, Bone of thy Bone and caused me to be a Partaker of thine Holy Spirit. God has given thee the Spirit without Measure, that of thy Fulness we might receive Grace for Grace. By the Means of this Blessed and Infinite Spirit that abides in my Soul, I am united to thee in a more perfect Manner, than the Tree is to the Root that bears it, or the Child to its Mother

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that nourisheth it in her Womb, or the Members of the human Body to the Head that gives them Life. Ties that unite me unto thee, O glorious Saviour, are more unchangeable than the Heavens and the Earth; as nothing can pluck me out of thine Hand, there is nothing can separate me from thine Heart. Whether I live or die, I am thine, my Lord and my God, and nothing can alter thine Affection for me. Death can take me out of the World, and carry me out of the Embraces of my dearest Friends; but it can never separate me from thine Holy Spirit, the Soul of my Soul, and the Light of my Life, which cannot be put out by all the envious Blasts and Storms of the Prince of Darkness: But it will rather bring me nearer to behold thy Face, to rest in thy Bosom, and unite me to thee more perfectly for ever. To whom shall I go? Thou hast the Words of eternal Life, and art the inexhaustible Fountain. Thou art my Hope and my Treasure, my Glory and mine only Happiness. O faithful and unquestionable Witness, I should be worse than an Infidel, if I questioned my future Salvation and Glory, since the Father hath not spared thee for me, though thou art his only beloved Son, the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person. Since thou, O merciful Lord, hast willingly suffered the most shameful Death of the Cross, and spilt thy precious Blood to wash away my Sins, and satisfy for my Crimes; and since thine Holy Spirit is come into mine Heart, to make me a Partaker of that precious Blood, and seal me for the Day of Redemption. O glorious Spirit of my Saviour, that rests upon me; when I shall be able to speak the Language of Angels, I could not sufficiently express the wonderful Operations that thou producest in my Soul. Thou kindlest in me such heavenly Flames as never go out, but are always alive, as the Fire of thine Altar. Thou formest in me a white Stone, where a new Name is written which no Man knows but he that receives it. Thou givest me to eat of that bidden Manna, of that Food of Angels, that the World knoweth not. Thou witnesseth with my Spirit, that I am a Child and Heir of God,

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God, and a Joint-Heir with Jesus Christ the King of Kings. Thou dost not only seal me the Pardon of all my Sins, but dost also purify my Conscience from all dead Works to serve the living God. Thou causest me to cry out, Abba, Father, and imprintest in my Heart the glorious Image of my heavenly Father. Thou art the Seal of my Adoption, the Earnest of mine incorruptible Inheritance, prepared for me in Heaven. Thou hast given me the infallible Assurances of a glorious and eternal Life, and begun it already in my Soul, granting to me its First-Fruits. Thou causest me to behold the Sun-shine of thy Grace, and makest it to give Light in mine Understanding. Thou dost not only vouchsafe to me the Favour of beholding from this Valley of Tears thine heavenly Canaan, but causeth me to taste of its Fruits. I am not yet come to the Fountains of Waters that spring forth to eternal Life, but I taste the Streams and Rivers that flow in me. I am not yet in thine holy Paradise, but thou hast caused Paradise to be in me; thou hast given to me an unspeakable and glorious Joy, and hast bestowed upon me the Grace of God that passeth all Understanding. O Living and Quickening Spirit, unknown to the World! Thou strengtbenest me in such a Manner, that Death shall never be able to fright me. Thou hast united me to thy self by an inseparable Union, O Prince of Life, and hast put in me a Seed of Immortality, an infallible Principle of Glory, and a Source of unspeakable Happiness: Thou art in me to dwell with me for ever, therefore, thou shalt fill up the Measure of thy most signal Favours. My Faith, by thy divine Assistance, hath spied out the Kingdom prepared for me from the Beginning of the World, and shortly I shall see with mine Eyes the inexpressible Beauties of that Celestial Country, that flows with the Milk of the purest and sincerest Joys, and with the Honey of the sweetest and most ravishing Comforts. Thou hast sent a Fore-taste of the Fruits of the Tree of Life, but I shall come into thine heavenly Paradise; I shall ever have my fill of those delicious Fruits. Now, thou hast

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caused some Drops of the Dew of Heaven to fall upon mine Heart, but then thou wilt make me drink of the Rivers of thy divine Pleasures. At present, in my painful Passage, in the midst of my Groans and Tears, I may gather some Ear; but, when I come to my heavenly Country I shall reap my Hands full with Songs of Joy. Here upon Earth I see God as in a Glass, obscurely; but in Heaven I shall behold him Face to Face, and I shall be satisfied with his Likeness. My Lord and my God, who by the infinite Merits of thy Sufferings, hast purchased for us this Spirit of Life, and who hast given to my Soul such an authentick Seal of my Salvation, and such a precious Earnest of thine eternal Bliss; I feel in me the Motions and Endeavours of this new Man that strives to leave this Body of Darknes and Death, to enter into the Light of the Living. Lord Jesus, since thou hast granted me the Spirit of thy Grace, enlightned my Soul with thy divine Knowledge, and caused me to know the Way of Life; since thou hast given me to taste of the heavenly Gift of the Powers of the Life to come; and hast vouchsafed to me the First-Fruits of thy Glory; and that I already feel Heaven in my Soul; since I behold thee with the Eyes of my Faith, I embrace thee with all my Affections, and that thou dwellest in my Heart; perfect in me the Work of thy Grace, and bring me at last to thine eternal Glory. Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation. Amen.



C H A P. XX.

The eighth Consolation, is to consider, that Death delivers us from all temporal Evils, that we daily suffer.

THERE are certain Pictures with two Faces, the one represent most ugly Features, and the other beautiful and pleasant Things. This is the true Emblem of Death; for it may be painted with a fearful Countenance, a lean Body, and Iron Hands, that ravish us from our Goods and our Honours; and that divide our Persons, dragging our Bodies into a loathsome Sepulchre. If we look upon Death in this Manner, we cannot but tremble and fear. We may also look upon it as a powerful Deliverer, that unloofeth all our Fetters, breaks our Chains to pieces, raiseth our Souls to the highest Glory and Happiness. If we consider it thus, there is nothing more lovely than Death, and nothing more to be desired.

I have hitherto endeavoured to shew how a believer shall strengthen and comfort himself against the Fears of Death: But now I shall add something more, with Heaven's Assistance. I shall labour to prove not only that Death is to be expected without Apprehension, but to be received with an holy Joy; that it is not at all dreadful, but rather is to be earnestly desir'd. I shall no longer give, to speak properly, any Consolations against the Fears of Death; for I hope to make it plain, that Death itself is to be looked upon as the greatest Consolation and Comfort.

That I may attain my Purpose, I shall shew, as in a Picture, a short View of all the dreadful Miseries,
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from which Death delivers us; and then I shall endeavour to paint out in the brightest Colour, or rather, I shall chalk out unto you the Blessedness and Glories into which it ushers us.

Man's Life and Misery are Twin-Sisters that are born at the same Time, and own *Adam* for their first Parent; they die together at the same Instant in true believers. We all know, that Man begins his Life weeping and crying, and ends it with Sighs and Groans. We come into the World all covered with Blood, and we go out covered all over with a cold Sweat. If the Child cries not so soon as 'tis born, we judge that 'tis dead; and when the sick Body ceaseth to groan and sigh, we say, that he is past Hopes. So that our crying is a Token of Life, and the End of our Sighs is likewise an infallible Sign of our Death. Wretched Man! how miserable is thy Condition? Thy best Friends rejoyce at thy Crying, and they weep and lament when thou ceasest to sigh and groan.

All the rest of thy Time between the Cradle and thy Grave is no happier. 'Tis but a continued Chain of Misery, a Mixture of Pains, a Succession of Evils, and a Sea of Bitterness. As one Wave falls upon the Back of another, one Evil is no sooner gone, but another follows and threatens us. One Depth calleth another, and all Manner of Floods and Storms pass over our Heads, *Job v.* As the Sparks rise out of the Fire to fly up, Man is born for Misery and Pain; and as the wisest of Kings speaks, *His Days are nothing but Pain, and his Employments but Trouble; in the Night his Heart resteth not, Eccles. iii.* There are scarce any Dwellings, but Messengers of ill News arrive at it sometimes, as they did to that of *Job*, Chap. i.

By God's unchangeable Order and Appointment the Days succeed the Nights, and divide the Year into two equal Parts. For, if the Nights are longer

in one Season, so much the shorter are they in another. But the Nights of our Afflictions are so long, that they seem to last several Ages; whereas, the Days of Prosperity are so short, that they are gone in a Moment. So that we may justly say with the Prophet *Moses*, *The best of our Days are but Labour and Sorrow, so soon doth our Life pass away, and we are gone*, Psal. xc. 'Tis as easy a Task to number the Stars of the Firmament, and to reckon up the Grains of Sand upon the Sea-shore, as to make an exact Examination of all the Evils that happen to us as Men belonging to a civil Society, or as Members of God's Church, and his adopted Children. Therefore, old *Jacob* had cause to complain, that the Years of his Life had been so short and evil, but ours are so evil, that they cannot be too short.

I should compose many Volumes, if I should undertake to describe perfectly all the Infirmities and Diseases that undermine the Body, all the cutting Pains and cruel Tortures that torment and rack us.

The most languishing Sickneses, and the most violent Pains that afflict and disturb this Body, are nothing in Comparison of the excessive Sadness and mortal Anguish that seize upon our Souls, and fill them full of Gall and Bitterness. I think there is no Man upon Earth that can boast of having passed but one Day without some displeasure, either inward or outward. For, we either feel present Evils that strike through our Hearts as so many Darts, or the Remembrance of former Grievs troubles us, or else the Fears of future Mischiefs vex and fret us. I may justly say, that the Devil is not so cruel to himself, as we are to our own Persons; for this evil Spirit cares not to be tormented before the Time, whereas we anticipate the Evils by unquiet Apprehensions, and wilful Vexations entertain'd in our Minds. The Fear of Misery makes us far more miserable; and the Apprehensions

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sions of an imaginary Evil, causeth us to resent a real Affliction, and an unfeign'd Torment.

When we consider any Man's Life, we only look upon that which appears most delightful and pleasant. We consider the Nobility of his Blood, the Variety of his Pleasures, the Greatness of his Riches, the Glory of his Offices and Victories, and the Pomp of his Triumphs. But scarce any Man takes Notice of his Miseries and Afflictions; or, if some be so observed, they are but such as are too obvious to every Man's Eye; as the publick Affronts and Disgraces, the Loss of a Battle, the Degradation from an Office, Banishments, Imprisonments, and such like unhappy Afflictions. But besides these Calamities which are visible to all the World, and the common Motives of the condoling Lamentations of our Friends, there are many secret Evils that be far more painful. Our nearest Relations discover not always our most sensible Wounds, to pour into them an healing Balm; they seek not into our deepest Sorrows, nor do they dream of applying to our Souls the most proper Comforts.

When you behold Stage-Players capering upon a Theatre, speaking as big as Kings and Princes, you seldom think, that under their magnificent and glorious Attire, they hide many filthy Rags, and perhaps, some incommodious Vermin, that stings them to the Quick. Thus when you cast your Eyes upon Riches, Glory, Pomp, and the Magnificence of worldly Men, you do not discover and see the Canker-Worm that gnaws their Hearts, and the secret Fire that devours their Souls. Some there be, that laugh in publick before Company, and appear with a merry Countenance, who are full of Despair; and in private tear off their Hair, sigh, and pour forth Abundance of Tears. Some feed themselves before the World with the most delicious Meats, and drink the rarest Wines, but inwardly they are glutted with Poison and Gall. This was the Con-

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sideration of the wisest of Kings, when he writ this Sentence; *I have said of Laughter, it is mad; and of Gladness, what profiteth it?* Ecclef. ii. 2.

As Poverty and a mean Estate are never without a Train of fretful Sorrows and Cares; likewise, Riches and Honour are never without Fears and Disturbances. And as there is no Flame ever so pure, but sends up a Smoke, nor a Rose so beautiful, but has its Prickles; so there is no Condition so splendid, nor glorious, nor any Prosperity so flourishing, but hath its Troubles and sharp Thorns. Every Man upon Earth (without Exception) bears his Cross, or hath a grievous Thorn in his Side. The Moth sticks to the richest Stuffs, the Worm gets into the Heart of the fairest Flowers and Fruits; and the Thunder-bolt strikes down the loftiest Oaks, the highest Steeples, and the most magnificent Palaces. Likewise Care and Grief commonly eat up the Flower of the greatest Prosperities, and the noblest Dignities are often subject to the strangest Alterations, and to the most terrible Downfalls. The richest Crowns cast all their Splendor and Glory outwardly, but inwardly they are felt to be weighty upon the Heads of such as bear them. A great Prince found his Diadem so burthenfome and unsufferable, that he cried out, *O Crown! if thy Weight were well known, none would lift thee up from the Ground.* 'Tis not without a good Cause, that such as are passionate for the World, and inclinable to the Delights of the Flesh, are in a continual Fear and Dread; for they be exposed to most imminent Dangers. If their Eyes were open, they would see a naked Sword always hanging over their Heads. As in that Statue which *Nebuchadnezzar* saw in his Dream, the Head that was of pure Gold, was as easily broken as the earthen Feet, and became as light as the Chaff which the Wind carries away: Likewise, the most honourable, the richest, and the most glorious Estate, is as well subject

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ject to the same Mischances, as the lowest, the poorest, and the most wretched. Where are any Riches and Treasures that are not succeeded by Poverty? Where rides that Pride and Pomp that hath not Shame to attend it? Is there any Grandeur in the Age not subject to the furious Blasts of Envy? Where is that lighted Taper that a Whirlwind and a Storm of Rain cannot put out? Christian Souls, take good Notice of the Fruits which the World gives to its Servants and Children; and you shall find that they are much like to certain Apples of *America*, of an excellent Beauty, and of a sweet smell, yet they are full of the rankest Poyson that kills infallibly such as unadvisedly eat of them. There is no Sweetness so great upon Earth, but hath a Mixtate of Bitter; nor Joy so pure and lasting, but is often interrupted with Sighs and Tears. The rarest Pleasures have a sad Countenance and a groaning Aspect. Our Hearts in the midst of Laughter, feel an Oppression, and our Joy is accompanied with Sorrow. Therefore, when the most experienced of all former Princes had taken exact Notice of all Things under the Sun, and tasted all the Delights of Life, he concludes, with this Confession, *That all things under the Sun are nothing but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.*

'Tis not needful that I should make here an exact and particular Description of all the sad and troublesome Accidents of this Life, that are able to turn the most flourishing Estate up side down. Remember, ingenious Reader, to run over carefully the whole Course of thy Life, and examine in the just Scales of the Sanctuary, all the good and evil Things which thou hast found by Experience. In one put all the Satisfactions of the Flesh, and whatsoever brings thee any Advantage or Content; and put in the other all thy fretful Cares, Griefs, Displeasures and Disgraces. If thine Evils and Miseries

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weigh not down the Balance, thou may'st esteem it a Wonder and a Miracle. Thou hast no Cause to boast of thy earthly Happiness. Mind well the Speech of *Solon*, one of the wise Men of *Greece*, to *Cræsus*, a Prince puffed up with his Riches and Prosperity; *That none could be esteemed happy before his latter End, and the Hour of his Death.* Consider, that some who have attained to a greater Degree of Happiness than thou hast, have fallen into a most wretched State on a Sudden. He who lately abounded in Wealth and Plenty, is reduced oft-times to the lowest Poverty. He who had whole Armies at his Command, is sometimes forsaken of all the World. He who had Princes for his Subjects, is often forced to obey a Slave. Some that fed daintily, are glad to eat the Bread of Affliction, and to quench their Thirst with Tears. Some who lately flourished in gorgeous Apparel and Palaces adorned with Gold and Silver, are now rotting in a loathsome Dungeon. Some are dragged from their magnificent Dwellings, to the most infamous Death. The richest and noblest Crowns have not protected the wisest Heads.

When it should be possible to go through this Life without feeling any Alteration in thine Health, nor suffering any Loss of Goods, nor Change of thy happy Condition, which is as rare a Thing to be found, as a strange Bird called a *Phœnix*; hast thou no Children, Parents, nor Friends whom thou lovest, or oughtest to love tenderly? Are those Persons without any Affliction? And is it not possible that it should seize upon them? Certainly, unless thou hast an Heart as insensible as Marble and Steel; unless thou hast renounced all natural Affections, thou must needs be moved with these Evils and Disgraces that happen to them in their Life; and when Death snatcheth them away, it must needs tear thy very Heart, and rend thy Bowels.

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But if it should happen, (which is impossible) that nothing hath ever afflicted thee in thine own Person, or in that of thy Friends; and if all such as are related to thee live in perfect and flourishing Prosperity like to those Countries of the other World, that are always covered with Flowers and Fruits; cast thine Eyes upon the Earth, and thou shalt there behold so many Evils and Calamities, that if thou hast any Sense of Humanity, thou shalt have Cause to weep. God commanded the Prophet *Jeremiah* to deliver the Cup of his Wrath to several People, one after another; but now, it seems, that he delivers this Cup to them all at once. For, where is that People or Nation, that may boast of never having drunk of it, and of not being in Danger of drinking? Some have drunk it up to the very Dregs, others drink it by Degrees, others have this bitter Cup brought to their Lips.

Our Saviour causeth his beloved Disciple to see two Angels, who had each of them in his Hand a sharp Sickle to reap the Corn, and gather the Grapes, *Rev. xiv.* Afterwards he discovered to him seven more, who had in their Hands Golden Vials, full of the Wrath of God, which they poured upon the Inhabitants of the World, to plague and punish them, *Revel. xv.* But at present, the holy Angels appear in Troops and Legions to cut off Mankind, and to transport them to the Wine-Press of God's eternal Vengeance. The wrath of God seems no more to be measured out by Vials, nor by Cups, but it overflows as a great River and a bottomless Sea, that swells and runs over the Shore and the Banks. In short, the Deluge of Evils that covers the Face of the Earth, is so universal, that the Doves, I mean, the innocent and meek Souls that love Peace and Rest, can find no Place to fix and settle their Feet.

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If thou hast any Christian Zeal and Charity to increase thy Sense of Humility, thou canst not possibly behold with unconcerned Affections, the despicable and dangerous State of Christ's Church on Earth. For 'tis like *Noah's Ark* in the midst of the roaring Waves, like the burning Bush of Mount *Oreb*, surrounded with Flames, like the Prophet *Daniel* in the Lion's Den, and like his Companions in the fiery Furnace, so that it may justly speak in the same Manner as the Ancient *Jerusalem*, *Is it nothing to all you that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the Day of his fierce Anger*, Lam. i. O blessed Church of God, thou hast felt Persecution from thine Infancy until now, *Psal. cxix.* Prepare therefore thyself to suffer much more in this Decay and Old-Age of the World; for the Devil will persecute thee with so much the more Fury and Violence, because he knows he has but a short Time, and must soon be shut up in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone.

In this Case, Grief is not only lawful, but commanded: For God requires us to put on Sackcloth and Ashes, *Isa. xxii.* He desires that we should be sick for the Troubles of *Joseph*, *Amos vi.* That we should weep with them that weep, *Rom. xii.* That we should remember the Prisoners, as if we were Prisoners with them; and that we should suffer with them that are tormented, as being Members of one Body, *Heb. xii.* We have good Reason to apply to the World, and to the Worldlings *David's* Saying, *Wo is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar: My Soul hath long dwelt with them that hate Peace*, *Psal. cxx.* *Jeremiah* had never so much Cause as we to lament, and to wish that his Head were dissolved into Water, and his Eyes were a Fountain of Tears to weep Day and Night, *Jer. ix.* And the Prophet *Isaiah* had never so much Reason to cry out in the Displeasure of his Soul, *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly;*

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bitterly ; labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the Daughter of my People, Isa. xxii.

'Tis not, therefore, without good Cause, that the Preacher acquaints us, *That the Day of Death is far better than the Day of our Birth* ; for our Birth causeth us to weep, and Death wipes off all Tears from our Eyes. Our Birth discovers that large Theatre upon which all worldly Tragedies are acted ; Death draws the Curtain, puts a period to all such bloody Scenes. Our Birth casts us into the Fire and Water of divers Afflictions ; and Death draws us out of those Flames and Bitterness. Finally, since our Life is but a Chain of Misery, and that Death breaks in pieces the last Link ; since our Life is but a continual Fighting, and that Death alone is the Victory ; 'tis most certain, that Death is not to be feared as an Evil, and an Enemy, but rather to be desired as a good Friend, and a Blessing. 'Tis reported of the *Thracians*, that they buried their Dead with Expressions of Joy ; and the Inhabitants of the *Fortunate Islands* sang and danced at the Funerals of their dearest Friends. I don't commend these foolish Examples of extravagant and barbarous People, who were without Hope, and without God in the World. Such cannot fear Death too much ; for, if it freed them from some present and light Evil, it cast them into an Abyss of excessive Torments. Death is an Happiness, it brings with it a solid Comfort and Joy, but 'tis when we die in God's Favour, and in the Faith of our Lord Jesus. God hath sufficiently declared the Happiness and Pleasure of his Childrens Death ; for he often abridges the Days of those wham he favours and esteems. Because he had seen some good thing in the Person of *Abijah*, the eldest Son of *Jeroboam*, King of *Israel*, he took him away in the Flower of his Age, 1 *Kings* xiv. He granted the same Favour to *Josias*, King of *Judah*, one of the most religious Princes in the World, for he had declared to him by *Hulna* the Prophetess, *Be-bold, I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou shalt*

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be gathered into thy Grave in Peace; and thine Eyes shall not see all the Evil which I will bring upon this Place, 2 Kings xxii. 'Tis not to be doubted, but that such are most happy that die in the Lord, and rest from their Labours; but I judge them happy in a two-fold Manner, that die, or rather cease from dying in such miserable Times, so full of Confusion and Disorder.

Would you not laugh at a Workman, that should grieve when his Task is ended, and his Labour finished? Or, at a Way-faring Man, that should lament to see the End of his painful Journey thro' Prickles and Thorns, and the scorching Heat of the Sun, or the insufferable Cold of the Winter? Or, would you not wonder at one that should vex himself when he is safely arrived in the Haven, escaped the Waves of a tempestuous Sea, and in a Shelter from the Storms? Wretched Man! Thou art far more foolish and extravagant than those of whom we speak; for the most painful Labours of a Workman, the most grievous Weariness of a tedious Journey, and the swelling Waves of a troubled Sea, are nothing, in Comparison of the Labours, Misery, and Troubles of this languishing Life. You would, doubtless, esteem it a very great Folly and Madness in a Prisoner, to be sorry for being delivered out of his noisom Dungeon; or in a Galley-slave, to be angry when he is to be loosed from his Chains; or in an Offender, to vex when he is freed from his Torments. What think ye? Is there less Madness and Extravagancy in you, when ye are grieved to see Death freeing your Souls from this miserable Body, where 'tis imprisoned, withdrawing it from the painful Employments of this unhappy Age, more grievous and intolerable than that of the Galley-slaves, and discharging you from the Troubles of the Soul, far more painful than the most insufferable Tortures of the Body? No, no, Death that thou drestest so much, is not the Death of the Faithful, but the End of his Miseries, and the last period

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of all his Torments, *Gen. viii.* *Noah*, when he went out of the Ark that stopped upon Mount *Ararat*, had never so much Cause to praise God, and to offer to him the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, as we have, when he is pleased to cause us to see the End of the Inundation of so many Evils and Calamities, and to make this floating Life, or this living Death to stop upon Mount *Sion*.

The Children of *Israel* sang Songs of Thanksgiving when they came out of *Egypt*, and saw themselves delivered out of a bitter and painful Bondage; where they had been employed in gathering of Stubble, and burning of Brick: But we have much more Cause to rejoice, and to sing Songs of Praise, when Death takes us out of the World, where we suffer a Kind of Bondage, labouring in vain, and enduring the scorching Heat of many Afflictions that consume us. Thou findest Fault with some of that inconstant People who murmured to return again into *Egypt*, when they were upon the Borders of the *Promised Land*; but rather find fault with thine own filthy Flesh, if it offers to murmur and revolt, when thou art at the Entrance of thy celestial *Canaan*. *Joseph* rejoiced when the King of *Egypt* sent for him out of Prison, *Gen. xiv.* And have we not Cause to be joyful, when God sends for our Souls out of the World, and causeth them to go out of their Bodies, which to them is a Kind of a Dungeon?

If therefore we can speak without impatient Murmuring, I conceive we have as good Reason as *Jonas*, to say, *O Lord, take I beseech thee, my Life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live, Jonas iv.* Or, as the Prophet *Elias*, *It is enough, Lord, take away my Life, 1 Kings xix.* Such a Soul may in a holy Transport, safely speak in the Language of *David*, the Man after God's own Heart, *Bring my Soul out of Prison, that I may praise thy Name. The Righteous shall compass me about, for thou shalt deal bountifully with me, Psal. cxli.*

A Prayer

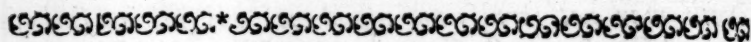
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A Prayer and Meditation for a Christian, who comforts himself with the Consideration, that Death delivers us from temporal Evils without Number, which so often assault us.

O Glorious Prince of my Salvation! Thou hast hitherto strengthened me against all Fears of Death; but now I heartily beseech thee to afford me such Grace, that Death may not terrify nor afflict me, but fill me full of Joy and Comfort. Suffer me not to follow the Example of the Israelites, who, forgetting the Hardships of their former Bondage, and minding only the Pleasures and Plenty of Egypt, mutinied to return back from the Borders of Canaan. Let not the Delights of this World, nor the fleshy Lust, possess my Soul; but grant that I may so mind the Labours and Miseries of this present State, that as a Workman, contented to see Night put an End to his Toil, or as a Traveller either by Sea or Land, willingly enters the Haven or Inn, where he is to rest, I may look upon Death in the same favourable Manner; and the rather, because of the terrible Confusions, the Calamities, Streams of Blood, and Mischiefs of War, of Fire and Sword that threaten and devour us. The lamentable State of thy distressed Church chiefly affects me; this like a small Boat in the midst of roaring and swelling Waves, ready to sink were it not for thy powerful Protection, who commandest the boisterous Element; or like a Daniel in the Lion's Den, in Danger to be devoured, didst thou not defend it from the furious Beasts. I am weary to behold so many bloody Tragedies acted, to continue so long in a World of Wickedness, and to be an Eye-Witness of the Sufferings, and to hear the Complaints of thy chosen People. O heavenly Father, I am contented to be freed from this chain of Misery, from this Life where so many Calamities oppress and afflict me; Calamities of sickness and distempers that torment my Body, and of other Afflictions, of which I am sensible. When wilt thou release me, O my God, from this Prison and dark Dungeon, that thy blessed Angel may

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convey my Soul to a better State out of the Reach of the Devil's Malice and Power ! When wilt thou send for me to introduce me into thy celestial Jerusalem, where I shall with the rest of thy Chosen, glorify thee my God, and forget all my former Sorrows, that shall be swallowed up in everlasting Joys, where no Pain nor Grief shall ever come near us, but we shall be secured by thy divine Presence, from the Sense and Apprehension of all Evil, and be put in Possession of an everlasting Happiness ? Amen.



C H A P. XXI.

The Ninth Consolation : Death shall deliver us from Sin, which we may see reigning in the World, and from the Remains of our Corruption.

WHEN God sent Angels from Heaven to fetch Lot out of Sodom, and secure him from the Flames with which he intended to destroy that abominable City, this good Man's Wife could not forbear looking back ; but she was, in that very Moment, sufficiently punished, by being turned into a Pillar of Salt, the Emblem of that holy Prudence, that this Example recommends to Posterity. That which made this unhappy Woman break the Angel's express Command, was her Affection for the Riches, Plenty, and Pleasures of that Country, which she had left ; not thinking upon the Baseness, Filth, and abominable Vices that brought God's Wrath and Vengeance upon the unworthy Inhabitants. Likewise, when God intends to take us out of the World, and to secure us from the Sense of his dreadful Judgments ; that which causeth us to look back, and hinders us from following the Angels that God sends to us, to lead us up to the Mountain of our Salvation, is, that we think upon nothing but the Riches, Honours, and Pleasures of this wretched World, instead

instead of considering the Iniquities that reign here below, wherewith we are defiled, while we continue in this corrupted Flesh.

Christian Souls, will you prepare yourselves to go to God? And do you wish that Death would comfort and rejoyce your Hearts, instead of afflicting them? Cast your Eyes upon those dreadful Vices that are so common, under which the whole Creation groans, as under an heavy Burthen. O good God! In what Age are we born? An Age like that of *Noah*, for all the Earth hath corrupted its Ways, *Gen. vi.* Nothing but a Deluge of Fire is able to purge it. There was never more Injustice, Perfidiousness, Treachery, Debauchery, Insolence and Envy; never more Vanity, Luxury, Pride, Cruelty, Blasphemies, Impiety and Atheism. We may justly apply to our Days, that which the Prophet *Hosea* said of the Corruption of his Time, *There is no Truth, no Mercy, no Knowledge of God in the Land: There is nothing but Swearing, Lying, Killing, Stealing and committing Adultery: They break out, and Blood toucheth Blood, Hos. iv.* Therefore, we have good Cause to make *David's* Prayer, *Help, Lord, for the godly Man ceaseth, for the Faithful fail from among the Children of Men. They speak Vanity every one with his Neighbour; with flattering Lips, and with a double Heart do they speak, Ps. xii.* O wicked World! A World overflowing with Iniquity, a Sink of Impurity, a burning Furnace, heated with the impure Flames of the bottomless Pit, and choak'd with the Smoke of Hell. But Sin reigns not only in this wretched World, but it defaces also the Church of God, and causeth most fearful Disorders among those that bear the glorious Name of *Christians*. They were anciently to be discerned from the rest of the World by their Speech, Conversation, and Behaviour; but the Devil hath wonderfully debauched them; he hath blotted out God's Image in their Souls, hath taken from them that noble Distinction, and removed far away all Difference between them and the World. We cannot with Justice say to most Christians of our Age, as was said to the

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Apostle St. Peter, *Thy Speech bewrayeth thee* : Nor appropriate to them, what *Isaac* said to one of his Sons, *Thy Voice is the Voice of Jacob, but thou hast the Hands of Esau* ; for, they have both the Voice and Hands of the prophane *Esau* ; they speak and live, as he did, they publish their Crimes with a brazen Face, and endeavour to glory in their Shame. The Air is infected with their prophane and filthy Language, with their impudent Lying, with their fearful Oaths, and grievous Blasphemies, and the Earth is defiled with their horrid Sins and abominable Crimes : Covetousness, Ambition, Lust, and all Manner of Vices have ascended the Throne, they act and command in chief in every Place. They who have in their Mouths the holy Name of the Lord Jesus, and make Profession of following his sacred Footsteps, give as good cause to take up again St. Paul's Lamentation and Complaint, *Many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are Enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose End is Destruction, whose God is their Belly, and whose Glory is their Shame, who mind earthly Things*, Phil. iii.

If we would seek in these Days for the Christian Virtues, where shall we find Faith, Hope, and Charity ? Where shall we meet with Righteousness, Fidelity, Holiness, Innocence, Goodness, Meekness, Humility, Patience, Piety and Devotion ? You Daughters of Heaven, what is become of you ? We cannot see any more your Angelical Countenances. We are so far from beholding the delightful Beams of your divine Presence, that we cannot spy out any of your Footsteps upon Earth. You may thereby understand, Christians, that the Son of God is at Hand ; for Iniquity abounds, Charity grows cold, and there is no more Faith upon Earth.

In the midst of such a woeful Corruption, who of us afflicts his Soul, as righteous *Lot* ? Who weeps Day and Night, as *David*, a Man after God's own Heart ? Where can we spy out the Fountains of Tears of the Prophet *Jeremiah* ? Or, the Confusion
of

of the Face of *Daniel*? Or, the Zeal of *Moses* and *Phineas*, and of *St. Paul*? If the Angel of God that went thro' the midst of *Jerusalem*, did take a Review in our Days of the Inhabitants of this Land, I am afraid he would not find many marked with the Letter *Thau*; not any weeping and sighing for the Abominations that are amongst us. For, Evil and Wickedness are become familiar to us, by the Means of an universal Infection. Our continual Conversation with the vicious, accustoms us to their heinous Crimes, and to their impious Discourses; as we are accustomed by Degrees to breathe in an unwholesome Air, without Aversion, and to hear the fearful downfall of the Cataracts of the River *Nile*, without Repugnancy.

But we are so far from grieving at the universal Inundation of Vice in the World, that we ourselves are carried away with the impetuous Torrent of Corruption. Sin gets upon us insensibly, and overcomes us; so that the World is not unlike to the House mentioned by God in the xivth of *Leviticus*; for, it is not only infected with an incommodious Leprosy, but it infects all such as dwell therein. The Men of the World have an easier Task to teach us their Vice, than we have to teach and persuade them to Virtue. As a pestiferous Body may spread the Infection, and give it to a thousand who are sound; whereas, a thousand in perfect Health cannot heel one infected with the Plague. So that, as under the ceremonial Law, the clean Vessel sanctified not the defiled, but the defiled infected, by its Approaches, such as were clean: Evil Companies corrupt good Manners, and the Flames of the most burning Zeal are extinguished by the Coldness of the Age. As Lambs cannot feed amongst Briars and Thorns, without leaving behind them some of their Wool: Likewise, the harmless and meek Souls cannot live amongst so much Cozenage and Malice, without losing something of their Innocence and Christian Simplicity.

Who

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Who is it amongst us, that can say with a safe Conscience, that the World is crucified to him, and that he is crucified to the World? *Gal. vi.* Or, who is it that lives in the World without being guilty of its Sins, as the Fish drinks of the Sea-Water, and receives nothing of its Bitterness? *Psal. xxvi.* Who can converse in the Courts of Princes, as *Joseph* in *Ægypt*, as *Daniel* in *Babylon*, or as the Queen *Esther* in the Court of *Ahasbuerus*? Is there any that can justly say, that he hath washed his Hands in Innocence, and purified his Conscience from all dead Works, to serve the living God? *Heb. ix.* Who can speak in this Manner, *I have purified my Heart, I am clean from my Sin*, *Prov. xx.* in Truth? *If we say that we have no Sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us*, *1 Joh. i.* We have good Reason to break out into the Prophet *Isaiab's* Exclamation, when he saw God sitting upon his Throne, *Woe is me for I am undone; because I am a Man of unclean Lips, and I dwell in the midst of a People of unclean Lips*, *Isa. vi.* Or, we may say with the same Prophet, *from the Sole of the Foot unto the Crown of the Head, there is no whole Part.* Not only the Souls that are fixed on the Earth, but also such as mount up to Heaven by fervent Prayers and devout Meditations, have good Cause to acknowledge their Imperfections, and to ask forgiveness. If any fancies himself to be perfectly whole and free from all Infection, let him look into his Conscience, and seriously examine it, and it will happen to him as to *Moses*; when he put his Hand into his Bosom, he took it out again as white as Snow, all covered with Leprosy, *Exod. iv.* Where is there a Christian, that feels no Law commanding in his Members, and struggling against the Law of his Mind? Who is there that finds not by Experience, the Truth of *St. Paul's* saying? *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the Things that ye would*, *Rom. vii.* *Gal. v.* Without Doubt, such as know not, nor ever have felt the bitter and vehement Strugglings of their carnal Lusts that

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war against the Soul, 2 *Pet.* i. cannot conceive what it is to deny themselves, to put off the old Man with his Deeds, to crucify the Flesh with its Affections and filthy Lusts, *Ephes.* iv. Such know not what it is to mortify our Members, to cut off our right Feet and right Hands, and to pluck out our right Eyes, *Mat.* x. That is to say, to destroy, and by an holy Violence, to give a deadly Wound to all our brutish Passions and vicious Affections, when they should seem to us as dear and as useful as our Hands and Feet, and as tender as our right Eyes, *Col.* iii. *Mat.* v.

If these cursed Affections could but declare their Names, they would say, as the evil Spirits of the Gospel, *Our Name is Legion, for we are many.* As that Devil that possesseth the Lunatick, mentioned by St. *Matthew*, cast him sometimes into the Fire, at other Times into the Water; thus these carnal Lusts labour to cast us, sometimes into the Flames of Ambition, or into the burning Heat of Covetousness, or to hurry us headlong into the Gulph of unlawful Delights, or into the Mud of filthy and carnal Pleasures. Furthermore, they break the Chains and Ties with which we imagine to stop their Fury; they war and fight against us by Day and by Night, and at every Moment they return to charge us Home, and renew the Combat. Every where they assault us, and have no more Respect for Temples and Houses of Prayer, than for common and publick Places. As *Satan* had once the Boldness to encounter with *Jehoshua* the high-Prfest, before the Angel of God; likewise these cursed Lusts are so impudent as to attempt us in the most religious Assemblies, and the devoutest Congregations, as well as where we are engaged in the most hellish and debauched Companies of the World.

But these Lusts that war against the Soul, are as subtle and malicious, as they are cruel and obstinate: When they perceive us upon our Guard, and see that there is nothing to be got, they conceal their Weapons and their Fire, but 'tis with a design to surprize and
burn

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burn us when we are least aware. As there are certain Creatures that counterfeit the Dead, that Men might spare their Labour to kill them: Likewise, this treacherous Flesh appears of its own accord as dead, that we might spare it, and not totally deprive it of Life. If then we leave it in Peace and Quiet, it recovers its Strength and Vigour, and assaults us afresh with its poisonous Darts. When we imagine that we have cut up this wretched Plant by the Root, it grows, and breaks forth into Bitterness. When we think that we have put out this Fire with the Tears of our Repentance, it kindles again, and bursts forth into fierce Flames. As soon as we have cut the cunning Serpent to Pieces with the sharp Knife of true Repentance, it gets together; and when it seems to have lost all Strength and Heat, it recovers again in our Breasts, and wounds us to the very Heart. In short, as the evil Spirit, mentioned by our Saviour in the Gospel, when he was driven out of one House, waited for a good Opportunity to return; which as soon as he perceived, he took unto himself seven other Spirits worse than himself, so that the last Condition of that Man was worse than the first, *Mark xii.* Thus after an afflicting Fast and fervent Prayers; after a Torrent of contrite Tears; when we imagine that we have cast out of our Hearts the most dangerous Lusts; if we begin to relent, and to open to them the Door, they burst in again upon us with more Fury, and render the Sequel of our Life far more bitter and unpleasant.

But if you had not so many Sins, and your Lusts were not so violent, when the old Man should not have so much Strength in our Members, and the Temptations should not overcome us so often; tell me, I pray, Christian Souls, in what Virtue do you excell? Have they all the Beauty, the Glory, and Perfection of God requires? Is your Holiness without the least Spot or Blemish? Is your Innocence as white as Snow, and as bright as the Light? Is your Zeal as hot and burning as that of the *Seraphims*? Is your Charity sincere, without

without Paint or Disguise, as that of Christ who gave his Life for you? Do you love God for his Name-sake, or because of his excellent Perfections? Do you love him with all your Heart, with all your Strength, and with all your Thoughts? Do you love him more than you love yourselves, or any Thing in the World? Do you hate all Things that he hates? And do you carefully abstain from every Thing that displeaseth him? Do you love your Neighbour in God, and for the sake of that good God whose Image he bears? Do you love him as you love yourselves, without Hypocrisy or Disguise? Do you never deal otherwise with others, than you would have them deal with you? And do you perform to them the same good Offices that you would have them perform to you if they were in the same Condition as you are at present? Do you shine in the midst of the dark Night of this Age, as so many Tapers lighted with the Beams of the Sun of Righteousness? *Phil. ii.* Do you live as Citizens of Heaven, and as fellow-Citizens of the Saints, and as the Children of God? *Phil. v.* Or as such as expect the blessed Hope, and appearing of the Glory of the great God and Saviour Jesus Christ? Is your Heart in Heaven, where your Treasure should be, and your Glory and Happiness? And do you walk as Persons that ascend up by the Steps and Degrees of Piety to the heavenly *Jerusalem*? *Tit. ii.* Do you go from Faith to Faith, from Hope to Hope? And do you make every Day some new Progress in Holiness? Do you never grieve the Holy Spirit, by whom you have been sealed for the Day of Redemption? Are you immovable, abounding always in the Work of the Lord? *Ephes. iv.* And do you endeavour to be found in him, without spot or blemish in Peace? *1 Cor. xv. 2 Pet. ii.*

Tell me, devout Souls, whether you be not as the Fire and Light? For as there is no Flame so pure, but hath its Smoak; nor Star so bright, but disappears at the Rising of the Sun: So there is no Life so holy

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holy and harmless, but hath its Imperfections, and cannot abide the Sight of an impartial God, and the exact Inquisition of his Justice. When we have well prayed and wept, and begg'd Forgiveness; God hath bestow'd upon us a new Heart, and a new Spirit: After all, we have need that he should enlighten us afresh with the gracious Beams of his divine Countenance, that he should lead us by the Hand, direct us by his Wisdom, and accomplish his Virtue by our Infirmities.

Examine seriously, my dear Friends, to what Exercises of Devotion you are most inclined, and what secret Motions you feel in your Souls. Who is it that hath the greatest Share in your Heart and Affection? What Thoughts lull you asleep, and what are those that awake you; What do you think upon for the most Part? Upon God and his Glory, or upon the World and its Vanities? Upon Heaven and its Excellencies, or upon the Earth and its Riches? Upon Paradise and its immortal Delights, or upon the Flesh and its base Satisfaction? And when you meditate upon divine Things, are you certain that you perform it with a religious Attention, with an inward Delight that ravisheth and comforts poor Souls? And when you offer any Prayers to God, do you discharge this Duty with Humility and an holy Zeal? Are your Hearts and Affections carry'd up to Heaven, before you lift up thitherward your Eyes and Hands? Are your Orizons like the Perfume of the Saints, that come out of golden Viols? Are they like the Incense of the ancient *Israelites*, that smoak'd upon an Altar, burning with a celestial Fire? Do they thus proceed from a Soul purified by Faith, which is more precious than fine Gold? Do they come from an Heart that is enflamed with a Zeal that never dies, and that ascends continually on high? Do you bestow your Alms with that earnest and fervent Charity that God requires of you? Do you open your Bowels to your Brethren, before you open to them your Purse? And do you bestow your Hearts upon the Poor, before you bestow your Money?

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And for the publick Devotions that you owe to God, pray tell me with what Humility and Respect they are performed? Do you call your Delight the Days dedicated to his Glory, and to the Celebration of his holy Mysteries; *Isa. lviii.* Or, do you look upon them as troublesome? Don't they cause you to complain in yourselves, as those prophane *Jews* spoken of by *Malachi*, *Behold what a weariness is it?* *Mal. i.* Do you go up to the House of God with the Voice of Melody, and Transports of Joy? *Psal. xli.* Or do you go up thither out of Custom, in a careless Manner? When *Jacob* went up to *Bethel* to offer Sacrifices, he buried under Ground all the Gods of Gold and Silver, that were in his Family, *Gen. liii.* Likewise, you religious Souls, when you intend to go up to offer your spiritual Sacrifices in the true *Bethel*, where God bestows in such plenty his Bread from Heaven, that gives Life to the World; do you not forget to bury all your earthly Cares, your carnal Lusts? Or else do you nourish in your Hearts, all those false Gods of whom the World is so fond? Do you look upon the holy Assemblies with an unconcerned Eye? Or do you behold them with Reverence and Respect, as the living Images of that glorious Church, gather'd together before God's majestick Throne, which worships him Day and Night in his holy Temple? Are those divine *Psalms* that are there sung, only upon your Tongues or do you sing them with your Hearts to the Lord? Do you think upon the Angels Songs and the holy Spirits Hallelujah's, with sacred Transports of Joy? Is the Word of God only an airy Sound, that strikes your Ears, or doth it reach your Consciences? *Col. iii.* Doth not your Heart burn within you, while God speaks by the Ministry of his Servants, and opens to you his holy Scriptures? *Rev. xix.* Doth this Heart of yours burn with an heavenly Fire, or with restless Impatience, to see the End of your Devotions, that you might return to your domestick Affairs, to your worldly Delights, or to your carnal Pastimes? *Luke xiv.*
Doth

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Doth your Soul thirst for God, for the strong and living God? *Psal. xlii.* And is the performing of the holy Will of your heavenly Father, become your Meat and your only Delight? *John iv. Psal. ciii.* In short, do you fly as swift as the blessed Angels, when your great God and Saviour offers to you an Occasion of advancing his Kingdom, of comforting his chosen and edifying the Souls for whom he died? When *Abraham* offered unto God many Beasts in Sacrifice, a flight of Birds came and lighted upon his dead Offerings, *Gen. xv.* Thus when we present unto God the Sacrifices of Praise and Thanksgiving, and intend to multiply the Acts of your Devotions, a great Number of vain and idle Thoughts come to interrupt us. *Abraham* frighted away those troublesome Birds; but 'tis not always in our Power to drive away from our Minds these intruding Thoughts that disturb us in our Devotion. When we will lift up ourselves unto God, and draw near to his sacred Throne, our Hearts are far more dull and heavy than ever *Moses's* Hands were, so that they fall down again to the Earth, and mind earthly Things. We need therefore that our chief Priest should hold them up: And furthermore 'tis necessary that they should be perform'd with the sweet Odours of his most holy Sacrifices? *Exod. xvii.*

If *David*, a Man after God's own Heart, intreats that he would be pleased to sanctify the Words of his Mouth, and the Meditations of his Heart, *Psal. xv*; if the Prophet *Daniel*, whom the holy Spirit styles *A Man greatly beloved*, *Dan. ix.* Who spent the Days and Nights in Devotion, seeks how to make his Prayers acceptable to God; if the Prophet *Isaiab* had need that his Lips should be purified with a burning Coal taken from the Altar, *Isa. vi.* Who will wonder if the Meditations of the devoutest Souls be so often interrupted? If their Prayers be so cold and luke-warm, who can think it strange that we are not able to pray as we ought? *Rom. viii.* And that we have need to desire God's holy Spirit of Prayer and Supplication, who
prays

prays and intercedes for us, with Sighs and Groans, which cannot be expressed? *Zach. xiii. Rom. viii.*

That which afflicts most the true Believers, is, that when they imagine that they have attained to some kind of Perfection in the Exercises of Piety, they find many times to their unspeakable Sorrow, that they are but Beginners, and that they have made no Progress at all. For as the Stone cast up into the Air, falls down of its own Accord, by reason of its natural Weight; and as the Water often heated, becomes as often cold and frozen, because Cold is a Property belonging to it: Likewise our Souls, that mount up to God in holy Meditations and zealous Prayers, fall down again to these earthly Vanities; they become cold and heavy; for these are their natural Properties. If God refused the Sacrifices of such Beasts as were lame and sickly; how will he accept of us or our Devotions? If he should treat us with Severity, we who are faint in his Service, and cannot walk in his Ways without halting and stumbling every Moment? For these Considerations I may apply to the spiritual Joy, what was said of the earthly and worldly Mirth, *Joy is cut off by Sadness, Isa. lxxv.* For when we have felt in our Breasts this unspeakable Joy of the Holy Ghost, and it begins afterwards to abate, it seems to us as if it had taken its Flight to Heaven, as the Smoak of *Manoah's* Sacrifice; then as great a Sorrow seizeth upon our Souls; therefore we may complain and cry out as *David, Will the Lord cast me off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his Promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in Anger shut up his tender Mercies? Ps. lxxv.* And pray in the Language of *Isaiab, Lord, awaken thy Jealousy, and the stirring of thy Bowels, that are shut up to me.* Finally, if after all the Exercises of Devotion, if after a serious and settled Meditation upon God's holy Word; if after Fasting and Mortification, Prayers and Tears, and a constant Attendance in the Duties of Religion, we find any good Progress

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in Piety, we may then also perceive Vice to proceed out of our most glorious Virtues, and perfectest Graces. For as the Moth enters soonest into the richest Stuffs and Cloth; thus Pride creeps into the noblest Souls, and breeds in the most enlightened Understandings. As a primitive Doctor of the Christian Church hath very well observed, All Vices are begot by Corruption, and by other Vices; only Pride and Presumption proceed from Virtue. O how hard a Task is it for a Man enabled with Gifts and Perfections that raise him above the Vulgar, not to be puffed up with Pride, nor deceived with a fond Conceit of himself! As the beautiful Bird looks upon and admires the dainty and various Colours of its Wings, thus we behold and admire ourselves, we are in love with our own Beauty, and idolize our Virtues. Therefore as the Nurse leaves the Child sometimes to its Legs, and suffers it to fall, that it might know its own Strength, and learn to hold faster by the Hand; thus God withdraws from us the Assistance of his Grace to humble us, and to cause us to implore most earnestly the Help and favourable Succours of his Holy Spirit. When St. *Peter* felt the sacred Flames of that holy Zeal that was kindled in his Heart, and that sincere Love that he had for Christ; he joyc'd and imagined himself to be strong enough to resist all the Powers of Hell, and to frustrate all the fiery Darts of the Devil. This good Opinion that he had of himself, and of his own Ability, transports him to that Confidence, as to contradict our Saviour Christ, and to protest, *Although all should be offended in thee, yet will I not be offended; though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.* This was he that trembled at the Voice of a Damsel, whose Fall and Apostacy, was as remarkable as his Confidence was great; for that he who thinketh he standeth, should take heed lest he fall, *Rom. xi.*

There is no good-natur'd Child, but is vexed to live amongst such as curse and reproach its Parents; and

and if it should happen to be concerned unawares in the Offence, or to occasion the Death of him from whom it had its Being, it will feel an eternal Displeasure. Now 'tis certain, that whilst we live in this World, we must spend our Time amongst those that blaspheme the holy Name of God, and abuse the Glory of his eternal Godhead. Moreover, Vice and Corruption are so universal, that we ourselves offend this Father of Mercies and Compassions; we add Sin to Sin, and compleat the Measure of our Iniquities.

Let us therefore conclude from hence, believing Souls, that Death is not to be feared as an Evil, or a Calamity, but that 'tis rather desirable as an Advantage and a Blessing. For seeing that 'tis to be longed for, because it frees us from all the Mischiefs and Sufferings of the World; we are rather to seek it with God's good Leave, because it closeth our Eyes, and conveys out of our Sight, all the Sins and Abominations that are in the World; and because it stops our Ears, and hinders us from hearing the Impieties and the filthy Discourses that infect the Air. Since Death is to be embraced with Joy, because it delivers our Bodies from the Diseases that torment them, and our Minds from the Cares and Displeasures that vex and afflict them; it deserves to be welcomed with greater Expressions of Gladness, because it delivers us from all Remains of Sin, and puts a Period to our natural Corruption: So that 'tis to be esteemed, and looked upon as the Death and Destruction of the Old Man, rather than the Death of a true Believer.

Sampson rejoiced in his Death, because he knew that in dying, his mortal Enemies should die also, and be destroyed with him. We have more Cause to rejoice at our Death, and to give God Thanks at that time; since in our dying, or rather in passing from Death to Life, we may see the Destruction of all the dangerous Enemies of our Salvation, who are more dreadful to us than the *Philistines* were to *Sampson*. All the most cruel and barbarous Men of the World

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are not so much to be feared, as the Lusts of our filthy Flesh, that put out the Eyes of our Understandings, that cause us to be the Devil's Sport, and to worship many false Gods.

We commonly run out with Haste from a Place infected with the Plague, and should not we make as much Speed, by our Vows and Prayers, to get out of the World, since Vice is so infectious and universal all over it, that so many thousand Souls are there-with miserably spoiled; since the World is a *Babylon*, where all Manner of Debauchery, Vice and Folly are mixed together, where Injustice and Impiety reign: Have we not greater Cause to be transported with Joy, when God delivers us from our woful Captivity, than the Children of *Israel* had, when it pleased him to call them out of *Babylon*? Should they not sing to him when the Lord brought them back, and restored them to *Sion*, who came from their Captivity? We were as those that dream, then our Mouth were full of Laughter, and our Tongues with Songs of Triumph.

In short, as the Lord Jesus, when he had restored *Lazarus* to Life, and taken him out of his Grave, had Compassion of him, and could not see him any longer wrapped up in his Winding-sheet, and tied with a Napkin: therefore he commanded, *Loose him, and let him go*: Thus this merciful Lord, who hath made us to be Partakers of the first Resurrection, and called our Souls out of the noisome Grave of our Lusts, is moved with Compassion for us, when he sees these wretched Souls drag about them the Relicks of Sin, and some Remains of that Corruption in which they were wrapped. Therefore he will cause them to hear his sweet and comfortable Voice, *Loose them, and let them go*. Let them go to the eternal Mansions, to the City of the Living God, to the heavenly *Jerusalem*, to the glorious Companies of Angels, and to the Church and Congregation of the First-born, whose Names are written in Heaven.

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation for a true Christian, who comforts himself with this Consideration, That Death shall deliver him from Sin that reigns so much in the World, and from all Remains of his wretched Corruption.

O Most Gracious High Priest, Holy, Innocent, separated from Sinners, exalted above all Heavens, who art now shining in Light and Glory, look upon me from thy Sanctuary, and have Compassion on my wretched State. Thou understandest well the Cause of my Grief, O Lord, who searchest the Heart, and readest my most secret Thoughts, that I grieve to see so much Injustice and Impiety reigning this Day in the World; to see Vice and Wickedness defacing thy holy Church. But that which chiefly increaseth my Pain, and aggravates my Displeasure, is, to find myself guilty and spotted with the general Corruption, and my Flesh warring and struggling against the Spirit. The Lusts of the Flesh not only disturb me, but they get many times the Victory, and insult over mine Infirmities. Sin appears to me, not only in all its bellish Deformity, so that I am thereby ashamed of myself; but I also acknowledge, to the Praise of thy Grace, that all that is best in me, cannot endure an exact Inquisition of thy Justice. Alas, my God! How imperfect is my Piety? How languishing is my Devotion? I worship thee too much for Custom, and in a very slight Manner. I often praise thee with my Tongue, and honour thee with my Lips, whilst my Heart is far from thee. The Love that I bear to thee is not pure and fervent; and my Charity, instead of being burning, is quite cold, or luke-warm. I have not a sufficient Trust upon thy Promises, and upon thy fatherly Care; my Hope is not settled, it doth not fill my Soul with heavenly Joys and Comforts. Thine Eyes, O Lord, that see all the secret Closets of my Heart, and pierce into the Depths, are too holy and pure, to pass over the Sight of Evil, and to approve of the ill-favoured Features of Satan.

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yet imprinted in me. Thou discoverest not only my Sins, Iniquities, and all my evil Deeds, but thou also beholdest all the Spots and Imperfections of my best Performances, and of my most glorious Acts. My Lord, and my God, I am not only grieved to see so much Sin in the World, in the Church, and in myself, but I am also troubled, that I have not Grief enough; that my Soul is not sufficiently vexed, as that of righteous Lot; that the Zeal of thine House doth not eat me up, as it did the Man after thine own Heart; that mine Eyes are not become a Well-spring of Tears, as those of the Prophet; that I am not heartily concerned for thy Church, as thine holy Apostle; and that I do not sigh and cry, as the Servants whom thou didst mark with the Letter Thau. O wonderful Lord! Since 'tis thy Pleasure, wherefore do I not embrace thee with a lively Faith and a sincere Repentance? Wherefore do I not strive by Prayers and Supplications, to obtain from thee thy most precious Blessings, an inward Change of myself and Spirit, that I may heartily love, fear and adore thee as thou deserveest. O Lord, I find thou hast not forsaken me, but hast commissioned Death to convey me out of this troublesome and sorrowful Abode, to destroy all my mortal Enemies, my Sins and Lusts, and advance me to the Freedom of thy Children. I am not disturbed at the Approach of so great a Benefactor, that rejoiceth my Heart, and causeth me to embrace and welcome its Arrival, as thy Messenger sent to draw me out of this Egypt of Cruelty and Oppression, out of this Babylon of Vice and Abomination. I am ready, Lord, when wilt thou free me from these Chains and Fetters of Mortality, to ascend up to my God and Saviour, who is ready to embrace me! Dispatch to me some of thy blessed Angels, who may carry me up to thy holy Mountain, to thine heavenly Jerusalem, to thy glorious Paradise, where no Impurity can be admitted, nor Serpent to seduce us, nor Temptations to prevail upon us; where I shall never offend thee, nor grieve thy Holy Spirit, whereby I am sealed to the Day of Redemption. O my God! I am weary to hear thy holy Name so often blasphem'd, and to see so much

Impiety

*Impiety and Wickedness reigning everywhere in the World
Haste my Departure hence, and the Accomplishment of
all the glorious Promises of Salvation to thy Church and
People ; when I shall behold thy Face continually, love
thee with a perfect Love, and worship thee without Di-
sturbance in the Society of the glorified Spirits, and holy
Angels ; when I shall sing forth thy Praises in Heaven, be
cloathed with the white Robes of thine holy Martyrs, and
with the Seraphims, attend upon thy magnificent Throne.
O my God ! Grant that thy holy Zeal kindled in my Soul,
may serve me as a fiery Chariot, and a sacred Flame to
carry and hasten me up to thy celestial Palace, where thou
hast prepared for me an eternal Mansion, and a blessed
Inheritance. Amen.*

C H A P. XXII.

*The Tenth Consolation, is the Glory and Hap-
piness of our Souls at their Departure out of
the Body.*

IF there were neither Punishment nor Torment
after this Life to be feared, the Wicked and
Unbelievers who prosper in the World, might justly
esteem themselves the happiest of all Men. And if
there were neither Glory nor Rewards to be expected
after Death, the Righteous and the Faithful who
drink, here below, Cups full of Bitterness and Sorrow,
would be the most miserable of all Creatures. The
Condition of the Beasts, would appear more happy
than theirs ; for they enjoy in Quiet and Peace, all the
Pleasures that their animal Nature is able to relish.
They are not tormented by so many Diseases as vex
our Bodies ; neither do they know the Cares and Dis-
pleasures, that consume and fret our Minds. They
grieve not for the Time past, nor trouble themselves
with any Apprehensions of the Time to come. They

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never feel the fierce Assaults of Lust: They are ignorant of many of those Passions, that torment and domineer over our Souls. All their Pains and Sufferings vanish with their Breath; so that when they are dead, their Sufferings have an End. If we make our Eyes the Judges of these Things, we may say, *The Accident that happens to Men and Beasts is the same Accident; as is the Death of the one, so is the Death of the other.* But if we search and examine farther, we shall find more Difference than between Heaven and Earth, between Light and Darkness: For 'tis true, that the Death of Beasts delivers them from the Sense of all Evils, but doth not introduce them into any real Happiness. When it puts an End to their Misery, it puts a Period to their Being, and to all that Pleasure and Content, which they formerly enjoy'd; for they die without any Hopes of Living again.

If we look to the Wicked and Unbelievers, we shall find that Death deprives them, not only of their Honours, Riches, and of all their Pleasures and carnal Enjoyments, but puts out their Taper to the blackest Darkness, and all their greatest Delights are lost in a vast Sea of Bitterness. If Death looseth them from the Chain of Misery, unto which all the Children of *Adam* are tied, if it frees their Bodies from the Pain of any temporal Evils, it casts their Souls into eternal Torments. But for virtuous, and the believing Christians, if Death is so great a Friend to them, because it delivers them from many Evils and Miseries; 'tis a greater Friend, in regard it opens to them, the Gate that leads to an endless Glory and Happiness.

The Son of God had a Design to persuade us this Truth, in that remarkable Parable of the xvth of *St. Luke's* Gospel. For at one Hand he shews a rich Miser, cloathed in Purple and fine Linen, feeding upon Dainties, and living in much Splendour and Magnificence; and at the other he discovers to us a poor Wretch; named *Lazarus*, all covered with Sores, lying

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ing at the rich Man's Gate, intreating that he might share with the Dogs in the Crumbs, that fell from the rich Man's Table. The Dogs had compassion on him, and licked his Sores. At last the poor Man died, and was carried by the Angels into *Abraham's Bosom*. O wonderful Change! He that was lately a Companion, scarce good enough for Dogs, now solaces himself in the Angel's Embraces. He that was lying at the Gate of a proud and unmerciful Wretch, is admitted into the glorious Palace of Immortality, and reposes himself in the Bosom of a charitable and rich *Abraham*, where he is satisfied with the Bread of the living God, and drinks of the Rivers of his Pleasures. The rich Man died also, but whilst his Body was laid in the Earth with State and Honour, the Devils dragg'd his Soul into Hell, and cast it into a Fire, that burns continually, and that nothing is able to extinguish. Therefore our Saviour represents this damned Soul, crying, out of Hell-Fire, *Father Abraham, have pity upon me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the Tip of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue, for I am tormented in these Flames*. In the next Verses our Lord shews, how all the Complaints of the Damned are fruitless, and their Tortures Remediless. He makes *Abraham* return an Answer to this wretched Son, *My Son remember, that thou in thy Life-time receivedst thy good Things, and likewise Lazarus evil Things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented*.

The Heathens have looked upon Death as the End of all their Afflictions and Sufferings; but they have never tasted of the Powers of the Life to come, they have never had any Assurance of future Glory and Happiness. The spiritual Joys, and celestial Comforts, God keeps for them that fear him and worship him in Spirit and in Truth. These precious Riches, and divine Excellencies, are only discoverable to the Faithful, chiefly since the time in which Christ our Saviour hath brought Life and Immortality to Light, through the Gospel. Hitherto I have given you a short Survey
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of the Calamities that attend upon us in this mortal State ; I have essayed to present to you all the Comforts, that we may gather from thence, to strengthen a believing Soul, and enable it to withstand and endure all the Encounters with which it is assaulted in this Valley of Tears. At present I intend to describe its future Happiness, when 'tis separated from the Body, and introduced into Heaven. I shall as far as I am able, discover to you that Glory and Bliss which our Souls enjoy, in expectation of the great Morn of the Resurrection. You must not think to see here any perfect Image of our celestial Paradise, or any magnificent Draught of the Advantages reserved for us there. It would be as difficult a Task as to paint the Sun in its Splendor, or to measure the Waters of the Sea, I cannot find Words to express my Thoughts, all my Conceptions are far below an Happiness so perfect, and a Glory so sublime. I shall think that I have done enough, if I can but represent to you some few Beams of so great a Light, if I can but shew some Drops of that Ocean of heavenly Pleasures, in which we shall swim for all Eternity.

I shall not deliver any Thing from my own Fancy, nor offer to speak of that which I have never learned from the great Doctor of our Souls. I shall not engage myself in vain Speculations, more fit to please and puff up the curious Wits, than to comfort and rejoice the devout Souls, or satisfy such as hunger and thirst after Righteousness. One Word from the Mouth of the Lord is better, and far more worth than all the Reasonings of humane Wisdom, than all the Subtilities of Philosophy, than all the Arguings and Conclusions of the most refined and eloquent Ages. In this Description, I shall not seek mine own Glory, nor the Applauses of the World, but the Glory of my God, and the Instruction of Souls which he hath purchased with his Blood. I desire to be understood of the weakest Capacities, as well as of the learned. I hope that such as know the Language of *Canaan*, such

as have tasted of the good Word of God, and of the Powers of the Life to come, will not mistake me. For others who have not been accustomed to the Relish of spiritual Things, to whom the Language of God's holy Spirit is insipid and unsufferable; if they are not moved nor benefited by this Treatise, I dare say 'tis none of my Fault, but theirs. Therefore as the wise Men, when they travelled to *Bethlehem*, where Jesus Christ was lying in a Manger, took the Star of the East to their Guide: So we, who are marching to our true *Bethlehem*, where our great God and Saviour is sitting upon the Throne of his Glory, will follow no other Guidance, but that divine Light which comes down from Heaven. And as 'tis impossible to number all the Stars that shine in the Heavens, but we are wont to reduce them to certain Figures and Constellations: Thus we will not undertake to shew you every particular of our private Meditations, upon this rich and divine Subject; but we will discourse to you of the chief Heads, leaving the rest to your pious Thoughts, and the Information of God's holy Spirit.

Whosoever thou art that hast embraced Christ, dead and crucified, by Faith and Repentance, and knowest thyself united to him, and incorporated into his mystical Body; remember to praise this merciful Lord, and rejoyce in his Salvation. Learn to admire the super-excellent Riches of the Treasures of his Grace, and seriously consider how magnificent and liberal he is to thee. For he intends not only to deliver thee from all the Sufferings and Calamities that afflict thee, but he will also raise thee up to the highest and most transcendent Felicity. He will not only draw thee out of the deep Abyss of Death and eternal Damnation, but he will take thee up to the Enjoyment of the most blessed Life, and an immortal Glory. He will not only remove thee from this wretched Wilderness, where thou art tormented with Hunger and Thirst, and exposed to the scorching Heat of a burning

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ing Sun, in poisonous Bitings of the fiery Serpents, but he will introduce thee into his celestial *Canaan*, where the Milk and Honey of the purest Joys, and most solid Comforts, flow in Abundance, and where thou shalt for ever repose thyself, under the refreshing Shadows of the Tree of Life. He will not only deliver thee from the Captivity of this miserable World, which is a true *Babylon*, full of all manner of Abominations, but he will lead thee into his holy *Jerusalem*, and carry thee thither upon his Arms; not with an Intent that thou should'st build and repair it with Cost and Labour, but that thou should'st behold the glorious and magnificent Structures, reared up by him alone from the Creation of the World, and that thou may'st be eternally satisfied with his overflowing Plenty. He will not only pluck off from thee the filthy Rags of Sin and Corruption, but he will cloath thee with a Garment of Light, of perfect Righteousness and Holiness. He will not only wipe away all Tears from thine Eyes, but he will put into thy Mouth Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving. He will not only break the Fetters from thy Feet, but he will place upon thy Head a Crown of pure Gold. He will not only draw thee out of a black and noisome Dungeon, but he will place thee upon a Throne of Glory and Magnificence. He will not only extinguish all the carnal Lusts that war against thee, and put an end to all thy troublesome Combats, but he calls thee to the Fruition of an eternal Peace and celestial Triumph. In short God will not only separate thee from the Acquaintance of sinful and debauch'd Men, but he will cause thee to enter in amongst the Thousands of Angels, and admit thee to the Vision of his glorious Face.

When a compounded Thing comes to be dissolv'd every Part returns to its first Principle: Thus, when Man dies, his Body returns to Dust, from whence it is taken, and the Soul returns to God that gave it. As the Bird, when its Cage is broken, flies away into the Air to seek its Liberty and Pleasure. Thus when

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this Body is broken to pieces by Death, the Soul flies above the Heavens, where it meets with Rest and Happiness; or, as 'tis when the Net is torn, the Fish falls into the Water, where it lives and enjoys all its Delights: So when Death comes to break the Strings of this wretched Body, the Soul enters into the River of living Water, and into an Ocean of heavenly Delights: Finally, as the Death of our Saviour Christ, rent in Pieces the Veil of the earthly Sanctuary, and discover'd all its wonderful Mysteries: Thus the Death of a Believer renders the Veil of this infirm and sinful Flesh, and gives us a Sight of the rich Treasuries and magnificent Excellencies of the heavenly Sanctuary. You Christians, whom God calls to his glorious Rest, who may express the Greatness of your future Happiness? 'Tis impossible to form a right Idea of it. When your whole Lives should have been nothing else but a Continuation of Misery, and a Chain of Calamities; you have now just Cause to comfort yourselves and rejoyce in God with unspeakable Joy. For when all Things are reckon'd up, *the Sufferings of this present Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed in us.* You can lose nothing in this Life, but God will restore it to you an hundred Times more in his Kingdom; besides, there is no Comparison between the Advantages of the Life to come, and of this mortal State or Being. Grieve not, believing Souls, to forsake an Earth overspread with Darknes, full of Misery, and all infected with Sin, since thy God purposeth to receive thee into new Heavens, all enlightened with a divine Light, and enriched with endless Felicities, where Righteousness and Holiness sit upon the Throne. Grieve not for thy Separation from the most pious and regenerated Societies, since thou art to be admitted into the Companies of the glorified Saints, and blessed Martyrs, who have washed and whitened their Garments, in the sacred Blood of the Lamb; since thou art from henceforth to be reckon'd in the Number; and of the Society

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Society of the Angels of Light, and of the glorious Cherubims. Fret not to leave behind thee the holy Congregations of the militant Church; for thou art going a-pace to the glorious Congregation of the Church triumphing; and in a few Moments thou shalt find thyself amongst the thousands of Angels and Saints, that worship God Day and Night, and adore him who lives for ever. If God hath bestowed upon thee worldly Riches, leave them without Regret or Displeasure, for thou art going to possess inestimable Treasures, which shall never be taken from thee. If thou art advanced to worldly Honours, cast off thy Purple and Scarlet willingly of thine own accord, for God will shortly cloath thee with an unconceivable Glory that shall never change. When thou shouldst be raised up to the highest and most splendid Dignities, when thou shouldst enjoy a great, a flourishing Kingdom come down from thy Throne with Joy, and let fall thy Sceptre and thy Crown; for God calls thee to sit upon a Throne that can never be shaken, to an incorruptible Crown, and to endless Triumphs.

Can there be any Town so rich, so great and noble, that thou mayest justly grieve to forsake it, at that Time when God intends to make thee a Citizen with the glorified Saints of the *Jerusalem* above; where neither Crying nor Labour, neither Fear nor Grief, neither Poverty nor Want shall ever come near thee; where all the Inhabitants are Kings, and possess inestimable Riches? Is there any Dwelling so beautiful and magnificent, that should cause thee to depart out of it with Sorrow? For God will lead thee into his own Palace, all built with fine Gold and precious Stones, where he himself is the Light, and the Lamb is the Sun. Art thou delighted in the Enjoyment of some pleasant Inheritance here on Earth? Then consider, that all the Inheritance of the Earth, are nothing in Comparison of that incorruptible Inheritance which God keeps for thee in Heaven, and hath prepared since the Creation of the World. Hast thou

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thou a pleasant Garden, or a rich Field? but what are all the Gardens of the World, in respect of the heavenly Paradise, where the Tree of Life grows, that brings forth its Fruits every Month of the Year, and where the River of living Water, as transparent as Crystal runs continually?

What Reason hast thou, Christian Soul, to grieve, when thou forsakest the Pleasures of the World, that thou enjoyest with the Children of the Earth, or the Delights of the Body, which are common to thee with the brute Beasts? Since God will satisfy thee with his most precious Delights; for in the blessed Vision of his Face, thou shalt meet with Fulness of Joy? Hast thou any Friends on Earth? Let it not trouble thee to leave them; for instead of one Friend here below, whom thou fancyest to be real and sincere, thou hast thousands in Heaven, who will receive thee into the eternal Mansions, and embrace thee as their Companion, and the Partaker of the same Glory and Happiness. Hast thou any Parents or Relations? I suppose they are not burthensome to thee, and that thou receivest much more Pleasure and Assistance from them, than Grief and Ingratitude; yet thou hast a spiritual Parentage in Heaven, and eternal Relations. Thou hast in the Mansion-House of thy heavenly Father, a great Number of Brothers and Sisters, with whom thou shalt live in a blessed Unity, as Members of one Body, governed by the same Spirit, and enflamed with the same Zeal.

Thou *Husband*, whom Death snatcheth away from thy beloved Wife, seriously consider, that God will unite thee to himself, by an inseparable Union, and that he purposeth to take up to him some part of thy self, that thy Expectation, thy Hopes and Affections might be now in Heaven. And thou also, O Woman! whom Death plucks out of the Embraces of thy dear and loving Husband, remember that thou hast a Husband also in Heaven, who hath espoused thee to himself for ever in Righteousness, in Mercy, and Compassion,

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passion ; a Husband always living and glorious ; a Husband, who loves thee with an eternal Love, that is stronger than Death ; whose Affections are enflamed for thee in such a Manner, that the Water of all the Seas and Rivers are not able to extinguish ; a Husband who bears with all thine Infirmities, and hath redeemed thee from all thy Sins ; a Husband who hath not spared for thee his precious Blood, that he might procure for thee the Glory and Happiness of this Kingdom ; who invites thee to his heavenly Nuptials, having prepared and appointed for thee a Room in the Banqueting Chamber, where thousands of glorified Saints shall sit, and where the melodious Harmony of Angels shall be heard ; a Husband, who calls to thee, reacheth out to thee his Hand, and opens his Bosom to receive thee. If thou hast found any Satisfaction and Pleasure in the Company of that Person, whom God hath given thee for an Assistant and Mate ; judge from thence, what angelical Delights thou shalt meet with, in the ravishing Embraces of thy heavenly Spouse. The most pleasant Marriage-days are gone as a Shadow, but the Day which shall bring thee to the celestial Bridegroom, shall never depart, nor darken, and the heavenly Contentments shall abide and continue with thee for ever, without the least Distaste.

You beloved, and loving Children, who are yet in the Bosom of a good Father, or of a tender-hearted Mother, suffer Death patiently to remove you far from them, and depart with Joy to that good God that will receive you as his Children, satisfy your Souls with the Milk of his most blessed Consolations, and will make you his Heirs, and Co-heirs with his Son Jesus Christ, say to him as the holy Prophet, *When my Father and my Mother shall forsake me, yet the Lord will receive me*, Isa. lxvi. Rom. viii. Psal. xxvii. And you Fathers and Mothers, that have a tender Affection for your Children, if Death takes them out of your Sight, and deprives you of the Comfort of their Company,

Company, grieve not as those who have no Hope. For when they should be never so accomplish'd, when they should have always given you Pleasure and Divertisement, what are all these pitiful Delights, that pass away in a Moment, and change oftentimes into Bitterness and Sorrow, if compared with the eternal Pleasures which we shall enjoy, in the Contemplation of God's glorious Face, and in a familiar Acquaintance with his divine Wisdom? You shall not return to them, but they shall in their time go to you. So that you shall shortly see one another in the Dwelling of the Father of Spirit, *Matth. xxvii.* Death separates you for a while, but the Author of your Life will bring you together for ever.

Finally, of what Age and Condition soever you be, if you perceive the Breath of your Life to stop, never grieve nor murmur at it. For if Death separates you from yourselves, it brings you nearer to God, your chief Good; and instead of a wretched and perishing Life, it will promote you to the Fruition of an eternal and ever happy one.

If we had lived in the Days when our Lord was on Earth, there is none of us but would have looked upon it as a singular Happiness and Honour, to have been admitted with *Peter, James and John*, when they went up to the Mount *Tabor*, to be Eye-witnesses of our Saviour's Transfiguration. A far greater Honour and Happiness, Death is endeavouring to procure you; it will usher you up to Mount *Sion*, it will transport you above all the Heavens, where you shall behold more excellent Wonders than ever the Apostles beheld upon Mount *Tabor*. For you shall only see this glorious Saviour whiter than Snow, and brighter than the Sun, but you yourselves shall be transfigured with him, and clothed with an exceeding great Glory: The holy Apostles saw but two Prophets; but you shall see all the Prophets, all the Patriarchs, Apostles, Confessors, Martyrs, the holy and blessed Virgin, and in general all the Saints that reign

and triumph in Heaven. The Apostle had Sight of this Glory of our Saviour, as of a Flash of Lightning; it continued with them but a Moment, for soon after they came down from that holy Mountain, and were again exposed to the same Temptations as before, and besieged by the same Calamities. It will be otherwise with thee, O Christian Soul, that art flying up to Heaven, from whence thou shalt never descend, till the great Day of the glorious Resurrection of our Bodies. Thou shalt not be assaulted any more by any Temptations. Thou shalt have no more Enemies to overcome, nor Bitterness to digest. Thou art going to reap and enjoy the blessed Fruits of thy Saviour's Victories, and to be eternally satisfied with the celestial Pleasures that are at the Right Hand of the God of Mercies.

We esteem St. *John* highly priviledg'd, because the Lord gave him a Sight of his Glory, of the Riches and divine Excellencies of the *New Jerusalem*: But how much greater is thy Privilege? For that which this holy Apostle beheld in a Vision and a Dream, God will discover to thee in Truth and Reality. Let thine Heart listen, and thou shalt hear the Voice of thy Saviour, calling already to thee out of Heaven, as unto his beloved Disciple, *Come and see*, come my good and faithful Servant, come my Son, [or my Daughter] and I will shew thee my glorious and magnificent City, I will shew thee the Palace of my Glory, and all the Splendor and State of my Kingdom. Come, and I will expose before thine Eyes, all my Riches, Treasures, and my most precious Crowns. Come, and I will cause the River of living Water, which issues from my Throne, to run before thee, and the eternal Delights that proceed from my Face. I shall shew thee all these heavenly Treasures and Glory, all the angelical Satisfaction, not in the Visions of the Night, in an Extasy, in an holy Ravishment of the Mind, or in a prophetic Elevation of the Soul; but I will discover them to thee in Reality

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lity and Truth, by the Assistance of a purer and more glorious Light than that of the Sun. I shall not only cause thee to behold this Glory, these Treasures and Delights, but I will cause thee to be a Partaker of them for ever; for as thou hast pledged me in the Cup of my Bitterness and Sorrows, as thou hast continued with me in my Afflictions, and hast been faithful unto Death; I will give thee the Kingdom, as the Father hath given it to me. I will give thee the Crown of Life, and will cause thee to swim in the vast Ocean of the eternal Pleasures. Thou shalt not only see all my Treasures, all my Pomp and Glory; thou shalt not only behold the Rivers and the Seas of my most wonderful Delights, and shalt be a Partaker of them; but thou shalt see me as I am in my Kingdom. I will pull off the Veil that covers me, and scatter the Clouds and Mists that hide me, so that thou shalt look upon me without Impediment, and behold me Face to Face. Thou shalt be transformed into my Likeness, and be satisfied with my Resemblance. You see therefore Christians, that tho' Death appears to us dreadful and ill-favoured, we may apply to it what *David* said of *Abimaaz*, that 'tis the Messenger of good News; notwithstanding its hideous Veil and Cloak of Darkness, we have just Cause to liken it to the Chariot of Fire, that carried up the Prophet *Elijah* into Heaven.

From what we have said, you may easily conclude with the wisest of Kings, *That the Day of our Death is better than the Day of our Birth*. For our Birth makes us Inhabitants of a miserable Earth; but Death carries us into a Paradise of heavenly Delight. Our Birth exposeth us to several Encounters, but Death lifts us up upon a Chariot of Triumph. Our Birth forceth from us Crying and Tears, but Death makes us sing for Joy. Our Birth brings us into the Light; but Death causeth us to shine as the Sun. Our Birth makes us to live a sensual and animal Life, of a short Con-

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tinuance; but Death introduces us into a spiritual and angelical Life, that shall continue for ever. In short, our Birth casts us into the Arms of Death, but Death leads to the Well-spring of Life.

Therefore the Apostle *St. Paul* confesseth that *Christ is Gain to him both in Life and Death*, Phil. i. And for the same Reason the Primitive Christians could not endure to see any Person afflicting himself for the Decease of Believers, because 'twas the Day of their Deliverance, Rest, Glory and Happiness. They commonly forbade all Manner of Mourning; for they judged that 'tis not proper that we should cloath ourselves with Black and Sadness, for their Sakes who are cloathed in White and shining Garments of Light and Immortality. They looked upon this Life as upon a continual Death, and upon Death, as upon the Beginning of a real Life. Therefore they stiled the Anniversary Day of the Martyrs Death, *The Day of their Nativity*. From hence proceed the usual Songs of Praise which they commonly sang to perpetuate their blessed Memories.

I need not cause you to take Notice, *devout Souls!* of the notable Difference between the Death of God's Children, and the Death of the Wicked. 'Tis as great as between Heaven and Earth, between Paradise and Hell. *Balaam* had good Cause to desire the one, and fear the Consequence of the other. We have as much Reason to cry out as he did, *Let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last End be like his*, Numb. xxiii.

You have heard how *Adrian*, an Heathen Prince, made this Address to his Soul, *My little Soul, my little Darling, Hostess and Companion of my Body; thou art going to wander up and down in cold, obscure and fearful Places; thou shalt never delight thyself in Jesting, as thou hast been wont; thou shalt never give me any more Pastime*. But when the Christian Soul goeth out of this mortal Tabernacle, he may talk to him in another Manner: O my Soul! Pleasant Hostess, and

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and heavenly Companion of this weak Body, thou canst not wander out of thy Way, for thou hast a faithful and a knowing Guide. Thou art already in the blessed Company of Angels that shall bear thee upon their Wings; thou art going to a noble Palace, enriched with Light and Glory, and blessed with the sincerest and most heavenly Delights. Thou shalt meet with no more Sorrows, Grief nor Displeasure, which so often disturb thy Quiet here upon Earth; thou shalt rejoyce for ever with all the glorified Saints, and sing Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving with all the celestial Spirits. O my Soul! How great is that Glory and Happiness which thou mayest justly expect from thy God, who hath both an infinite Power, and an infinite Mercy and Goodness, since he hath endeared thee unto himself, by giving his own Life to free thee from Death and eternal Damnation! If your Friends, or rather your Enemies, on this Occasion, weep and are grieved at your Departure: If they labour by their Tears and Sighs, to remove your Heart and to persuade you to remain yet here below; speak to them as St. Paul did to those that wept about his Neck; *What mean ye to weep and to break my Heart?* Acts xxi. St. Paul was then in his Journey to Jerusalem, where he was to be bound, imprisoned, and to be carried to the City of Rome, where he was to die upon a Scaffold by the Separation of his Head from his Body; notwithstanding St. Paul's Friends comforted themselves with this Expression, *The Will of the Lord be done.* And what mean ye, my Friends! Will ye stop me from going up to an heavenly Jerusalem, at the Gates whereof I must cast off all these Chains and Fetters of Mortality? I must leave all my Sins, my Sufferings and Grief. I shall enter into a new Glory, into the ever-blessed Company of Saints and Angels. If your Love be sincere and real, prefer my Felicity and Rest, to the small Satisfaction that you find in my Compa-

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ny here below. Consider that in the House of my God, and in the Vision of his glorious Face, I shall find every Moment more Joy and Pleasure, than I should have met with upon Earth in thousands of Ages, all the Pomp and Splendor of the World, all the Glory and State, its Riches and Treasures, its Pleasures and Delights, are mean and contemptible to those I am going to enjoy in Heaven, as a few Drops of Water to a boundless Sea, or as a Flash of Lightning to the Noon-Sun. Must the blind Passion which you have to enjoy me, hinder me from seeing the Face of my God and heavenly Father? Suppose I were now shut up with you in some dark Dungeon, and bound with the same Chain; would you rather see me your Companion, to continue in your Misery and Sufferings, or to behold me at a Distance at Liberty, in the Fruition of a perfect Satisfaction? Pretend not, that we shall never see one another any more: For can you be so great an Unbeliever as to doubt of God's Mercy, that intends to bring us together again in Heaven? Death separates us for a Moment, but the Prince of Life will unite us together for ever in his Father's House, whither he is gone to prepare a Place for us. O devout and religious Soul! By such Language as this thou shalt be able to mollify the hardest Hearts, and prepare them to behold thy Translation into Heaven, as *Elisha*, when he saw his Master's Rapture. If they feel any Displeasure and Grief for thy Separation from them; they will have more Joy and Comfort to consider with the Eye of Faith, that Extraordinary Glory and Happiness into which God intends to receive thee, thro' his infinite Goodness and Mercy.

If it happens otherwise, and that thou art to deal with weak Minds, whose Love is blind, and whose Passions are so unreasonable, as to resist God's Appointment, and hinder thy Promotion to Happiness; thou must overcome by the Strength of God's Grace, and the Assistance of his Holy Spirit, all the furious Reluctancies

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Reluctancies of Nature. Thou must imitate St. *Peter* when he saw our Saviour Christ in his Transfiguration upon Mount *Tabor*; he forgot his Family, and all the dearest Enjoyments in the World; therefore in that Excess of Joy, he cried out, *Lord it is good for us to be here.* In the same Language must you speak, Christian Souls, I dare be bold to affirm, if your Mind is raised up by Faith in Heaven, to behold Jesus Christ shining in Light and Glory, and surrounded by all the holy Angels and immortal Spirits; as soon as you shall have but the least Relish of Paradise, you will be so ravish'd with that extraordinary Happiness, that you will easily forget the most lovely Enjoyments of the Earth, unto which you had devoted your Affections. So that in that Transport of Joy, you will be ready to burst out in this Language, My Lord, and my God I am sick with Love for thee, I wish for nothing but for thy glorious Presence; my chief Happiness is to be with thee, and to behold thy Face, where I see already so much Light and Love. I confess we shall not say as St. *Peter*, *Let us build Tabernacles*; for we shall never be concerned as Soldiers, and Travellers in Fights and Journies. We shall not say, let us build an House, that we may dwell with thee and thy blessed Company; For I see, O God, with the Eye of Faith, the Palace which thou hast built from the Foundation of the World, where thou hast prepared a Place for me. Lord, open to me the Gates of this glorious Palace, that I may enter in, and sing forth thy divine Praises.

My dear Friend, shall the miserable *Pagans*, who never tasted of the heavenly Gift, who were never made partakers of the Spirit of Grace, nor of the Powers of the Life to come, the Heathens who were without Hope, and without God in the World; shall they march courageously to meet Death, and wilt thou that hast some Fore-tastes of the Happiness of Heaven, and hast seen some Beams of its Glory, canst thou not resolve to depart out of the World?

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Shall a *Seneca*, who hath no other Means to strengthen himself, but the Persuasion of his vain Philosophy; who hath no Expectation of Advantage of the Life to come shall such an one look with a steadfast Countenance upon his Blood and Life, gushing apace out of his Veins? And thou, my Brother, hast thou been brought up under the Tuition of an eternal Wisdom? Dost thou embrace, by Faith, the Glory and Felicities prepared for thee by God, and art not able to look upon Death, with Resolution and Courage? And canst not leave the World with Expressions of Joy? Shall *Socrates*, whose infirm Body was animated by a sinful Soul, and who had no manner of Antidotes against Death, drink up that Poison that was mixed for him, as a pleasant Potion? And thou, Christian, who art animated by the Spirit of the living God, that seals to thee his great and most precious Promises; thou Christian, who enjoyest the Earnest of that Inheritance prepared for thee in Heaven; shalt not thou be able to swallow down with Content, the Cup that Death holds out to thee? Thou hast a powerful and an infallible Antidote against this Poison; for after this bitter Cup, thou art going where thou shalt drink at Leisure, out of the Rivers of eternal Pleasures. Shall it be said, that in the Jews Houses, at the Time of Death, the Sound of Instruments of Musick was heard, together with Crying and Lamentations; and at thy Dwelling, who hast an Interest in Christ crucified, and seest him reigning and triumphing in Heaven; there shall be nothing heard but Weeping and Sighing, and no praising God, nor giving of Thanks?

Finally, in regard so many Persons of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions, have desired Death, to be free from all earthly Evils and Calamities; hast not thou greater Reason to wish for it heartily, when it shall please God that thou mayest enter into the Fruition of the Advantages and Happiness of the heavenly Life? How excellent is thy Loving-Kindness, O God! Therefore the Children of Men, or rather thy Children,

dren, the Brothers and Sisters of Jesus Christ, thy Well-beloved Son, put their Trust under the Shadow of thy Wings ; they shall be fully satisfied with the Fatness of thy House, and thou shalt cause them to drink out of the Rivers of thy Pleasures.

If thou be passionately desirous to taste of the angelical Delights, and relish the divine Pleasures, that flow from the Throne of God and of the Lamb ; if you be really a thirst for God, will not you speak in *David's Language*? *Psal. xlii. As the Heart panteth after the Water-brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O God ; my Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come and appear before God?* *Psal. lxiii.* And elsewhere, *O God thou art my God, early will I seek thee, my Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty Land, where no Water is, to see thy Power and Glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary,* 'Tis not possible to taste of the heavenly Joys, but we are constrained to cry out as the Man after God's own Heart ; *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord, my Heart and my Flesh crieth out for the living God,* *Psal. lxxxiv.*

Consider well, believing Soul, what vast Difference there was between the earthly *Jerusalem*, for which *David* was so passionate, and the heavenly *Jerusalem* where God intends to receive thee. What great Disproportion was there between the little Stream of *Shilo*, and the large River of Paradise ; between the material Tabernacle, the Mercy-seat cover'd over with fine Gold, upon which the *Cherubims* stretched out their Wings ; and the immaterial Sanctuary of Heaven, of Jesus Christ the true Ark of the Covenant, in whom are hid the richest Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, in whom the Fulness of the God-head dwells bodily, and in whose glorious Presence the *Seraphims* cover their Faces with their Wings, *Col. ii.* How contemptible were the Sacrifices, Oblations and Burnt-Offerings of the Children
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of *Israel*, in Comparison of the spiritual Sacrifices that are presented to God in Heaven, in Comparison of the Offerings burning there entire in the Flames of an holy Zeal, and of a perfect Charity? And what was all the Frankincense of *Arabia*, and the sweet Smells of the *holy Land*, which were consumed in God's Presence, if compared with the sacred Perfumes that mount up out of the golden Vials that are in the Hands of all the Members of the glorified Church! Since *David* esteems a Door-keeper of the House of the Lord, an happy Man on Earth, how great shall thy Glory be, and extraordinary thy Happiness. O believing Christian? For thou art going to be advanced to the most honourable Room of that celestial Dwelling, which God hath built with his own Hands. To this Purpose, our Lord Jesus hath made thee this gracious Promise; *Him that overcometh, will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the Name of my God, and the Name of the City of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my God, and I will write upon him my new Name, Rev. iii. 12.* If this great King was so desirous to hear the *Levites* singing the Praises of God, with their Tongues, and Instruments of Musick, how much more passionate should we be to hear the Harmonies of Heaven, and celestial Hymns of the holy Angels, Arch-angels, Cherubims, Seraphims, and of the glorified Saints, who have in their Mouths every one a new Song, the Song of *Moses*, and of the Lamb?

When the Shepherds heard some few Expressions of the Angels Songs, who praised God at the Nativity of the Son of God, they began to rejoyce with an exceeding great Joy, they left their Flocks, and ran in haste to look upon the Child Jesus in the Manger of *Bethlehem*. And thou, devout Soul, thou hearest already the sweet Anthems of Paradise, and the ravishing Consorts of Thousands of Angels; thou knowest that thy Saviour sits there upon a Throne cloathed with
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Glory and divine Majesty, and wilt thou not forsake all the base Employments of this sensual and animal Life, to go and see this wonderful Saviour, who expects thee, and intends that thou shalt sit also with him upon his Throne?

Zaccheus, climbed upon a Sycamore-Tree with an earnest Desire to behold the Lord Jesus as he passed by, when he was in a State of Humiliation and Abasement shouldst not thou be as earnest, O Christian Soul, to fly up above the Heavens, to see this merciful Saviour in the State of his Glory and Elevation, and to have him always in thine Eye for ever and ever? When our Lord was come into the House of this poor Publican, he told him, that Salvation was that Day come to his House; and shalt not thou, O blessed Soul, have more Reason to say when thou shalt enter into the Palace of this glorified Redeemer, I am this Day entering into my Salvation and my Glory?

We highly esteem *Jacob's* Happiness, when he was in *Bethel*, because God appear'd to him in that admirable Vision, mention'd in the xxviiith of *Genesis*; but if thou art an *Israelite* without Fraud, I esteem thee to be in a more happy and a more blessed State. Thou hast more Reason to break out in *Jacob's* Language, *This is God's House and the Gate of Heaven*. *Jacob* saw the Heavens open, but he was not admitted into them at that Time; but now God opens these Heavens to receive and lodge thee for ever. The holy Angels of God went up and down the Ladder, that reached up from the Earth to Heaven; but they left *Jacob* at the Bottom of this Ladder; whereas the Angels that are about thee, are come down to cause thee to ascend up with them, or rather to carry thee up in their Hands, and bring thee to Christ, typified with this mysterious Ladder. *Jacob* saw God at the Top of this Ladder, but he was to go afterwards to *Padan Aram*, he was to travel up and down, to suffer many Inconveniences, the Heat of the Day, the Frost of the Night, the Displeasure of his Father-in-Law, and his Treachery; he was to fly from
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the Cruelty of his Brother *Eſau*; nay, more than that he was forced to ſtruggle and wreſtle with God himſelf. Whereas here is now the End of thy Pilgrimage, of all thy Troubles and Encounters. Thou ſhalt never feel the burning and ſcorching Heat of thy Afflictions. Thou ſhalt be no more tortured with the Fears and Apprehenſions that now congeal thy Blood: Thou ſhalt no more ſtand upon thy Guard for fear of Deceits, and violent Dealings of Men. Thou ſhalt wreſtle no more with God by Prayers, Supplications, and Tears, for they ſhall be no more in Uſe. God ſhall load thee with his moſt extraordinary Bleſſings, and beſtow himſelf upon thee.

The Prophet *Moses* wiſhed very paſſionately to ſee but for a Moment God's Face, whereof he had beheld ſo many glorious Expreſſions; and ſhouldſt not thou deſire as paſſionately to ſee that beautiful and everſhining Countenance in its Glory and Splendor? O religious Soul, who art enflamed with this divine Affection, God will ſhortly gratify thy Deſires. So that thou may'ſt ſay to him as one of the Prophets, *Thou ſhalt cauſe me to know the Way of Life: Thy Face is the Fulneſs of Joy, and at thy right Hand are Pleaſures for evermore.*

Chriſtian, if thou haſt but as much Faith and Affurance, as there is Glory and Happineſs in Heaven, with what Exceſs of Joy would'ſt thou leave the World and all its Vanities, to aſcend up to the magnificent Palace, purchaſed for thee with the precious Blood of thy Redeemer?

Jonathan's Eyes were once enlightened, when he taſted ſome Honey with the End of his Rod, which he had found in a Rock; and thou, Believer, if thou haſt by Faith taſted the divine Sweetneſs that proceeds from Chriſt, the Rock of Eternity, thine Underſtanding will be all enlightned. Thou ſhalt need no other Conſolation againſt Death, for Death itſelf ſhall fill thee full of Conſolation and real Joy; ſo that thou ſhalt have Cauſe not to ſpeak, only as *Jacob*, *O God, I expect*

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thy Salvation, Gen. xlix. but as King David, I was glad when they said unto me, let us go up into the House of the Lord, our Feet shall stand within thy Gates, O Jerusalem, Psal. cxxii. By this Means thou shalt not only expect with Patience, and embrace with Joy, the Blessed News of this glorious Salvation, but thou shalt endeavour to hasten its Coming by thy continual and repeated Sighs. O my God, when wilt thou stretch out to me from above thy glorious Arms? When shall I see plainly thy divine and glorious Face? When wilt thou cause me to drink out of the Rivers of Pleasures? How blessed is the Man whom thou hast chosen and taken to thyself, to dwell for ever in thy Courts? Such shall be satisfied with the good Things of thy House, and of thy glorious Palace

Joseph marched out of his Prison in haste, to go to the Palace of the King of *Ægypt*; and hast not thou as much Reason to make as much Haste out of the Prison of this wretched Body, O believing Soul, that thou may'st ascend up to the Palace of the King of Kings, who intends to install thee into such a glorious State, in Comparison of which, all the Pomp of *Pharaoh*, and of all the Kings and Princes of the Earth, is nothing but as the Hoar-frost of the Night?

Bartimeus forsakes willingly his Mantle to creep to the Lord Jesus, when he called him; and thou Christian Soul, wilt not thou leave this Body, which is as a troublesome Garment to thee, to ascend up to this Divine Saviour, who intends to cure thee of all thy Distempers and Diseases, and who purposes to load thee, with his Blessings and unspeakable Favours? He will not only bring thee to behold the refreshing Light of Heaven, but he will also cause thee to shine as the Sun for ever and ever.

Religious Soul, cast off this spotted Garment of the Flesh, and so much the more chearfully, because God holds out in his Hand a Garment of Light and Glory, which he will bestow upon thee. For it shall happen to thee as to the Prophet *Elijah*, who having
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let fall his Mantle, he found himself all encompass'd about with Flames of Fire, and an extraordinary Light. As soon as thou shalt cast off this miserable Body, thou shalt be surrounded with celestial Flames, in which thou shalt mount up to Heaven into the Dwelling of Immortality, where thou shalt be like God, who cloaths himself with Light as with a Garment. To this purpose the Words of the Prophet *Zachariah*, concerning the High-Priest *Joshua* are very proper; he was arrayed with filthy Garments, but an Angel from Heaven calls to them that waited before him; *Take away the filthy Garments from him, and cloath him with Change of Raiment, let them set a fair Mitre upon his Head*: This, O Christian Soul, is the true Image of thy Condition, at thy Departure, and the lively Portraiture of thy future Happiness. At present thou art cloathed with a Body undermined by Sickness and Labour; thou bearest about thee the Relicks of the old Man; but behold, God calls to thee from his holy Sanctuary; Take away from him this old Garment, pluck off all Remains of his old cloathing bespotted with Sin, where the Devil's Image is yet to be seen, and give him the sacred Ornaments of a royal Priesthood; cloath this Soul with a long Garment whitened in the Blood of the Lamb, gird it about with the Ephod of Righteousness; put upon its Head an incorruptible Crown, and in his Hand a golden Vial, that it may for ever offer up the heavenly Perfumes in company of all the glorified Saints.

If after all this, O Christian! thou doubtest of the Felicity and Glory of such as die in the Lord Jesus, hear what an Apostle saith, who was himself ravished up into the third Heaven, where he beheld in this glorious Palace unspeakable Things; *We know, that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be cloathed upon with our House which is from Heaven. If so be that being cloathed we shall not be found naked*;

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ked; for we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed but clothed upon, that Mortality might be swallowed up of Life. And listen to what the holy Ghost saith, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their Labours, and their Works follow them.

Would to God that we had some other Word besides that of Death, to express the wonderful and happy Change that we make when we go out of his miserable World. For to speak properly, we cannot be said *to die*, when we leave a Place full of Misery, to enter into another, blessed with an endless Felicity; when we exchange a laborious State for a peaceable and happy Rest; when we come off from a cruel War, to enjoy the Pleasures of everlasting Joys; when we pass through Death to an endless Life; and forsake a Tomb to mount up upon a Throne. Christian Soul, remember thy Beginning and thine End; consider what thou art, from whence thou proceedest, and whither thou goest. Thou art a living Image of thy Creator, and a Beam of Glory; thou art of a celestial and immortal Nature. God hath washed and cleansed thee in the Blood of his Lamb, without Spot or Blemish, and sanctified thee by his holy Spirit. He hath brought thee to a Disposition fit to enter into his holy City, and he is ready to admit thee to the Fruition of his Glory; *thou hast fought a good Fight, finished thy Course, and kept the Faith*, 'tis therefore high Time that thou shouldest receive the Crown of Life. Thou hast this precious Crown already in thy Hands. Thou art at the Gates of Heaven, at the Entrance of Paradise.

O therefore, O believing Soul! Go with Joy and Gladness to this great God that calls thee, to this merciful Saviour that stretcheth forth his Hands to thee, and opens his Bosom to receive thee. Go into the glorious Company of Angels and blessed Spirits. Take upon thee these beautiful Robes of Light, with which thine heavenly Father will cloath thy Nakedness

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ness, and accept this immortal Crown that he offers to thee. Go, and satisfy thyself with the Bread of the Kingdom of Heaven, and remove thy Thirst with the crystal Waters of that *River of Pleasure, which proceeds from the Throne of God and of the Lamb.* Go and behold the Face of the Father of Lights, be happy with his divine Resemblance, and be transform'd into his glorious Image.

O blessed Soul! Seest thou not already the Heavens open, and Jesus Christ at the right Hand of God the Father, holding out his Hand to thee, offering to receive thee into his glorious Rest? Seest thou not the Angels of Heaven (cloathed in white Raiment) coming to transport thee out of this miserable State? Seest thou not how thou art already encompassed about with light and celestial Flames? Dost thou not relish the Sweetness of Paradise? Is not there a Heaven already in thine Heart? Hearest thou not the Hymns of the glorified Spirits? Hath not the Lord caused thee to understand that sweet and comfortable Voice sounding in thine Ear, *Verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt be this Day with me in Paradise; Come, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord!* Feelest thou not thyself lifted up above all earthly and perishing Things? Dost thou not fly upon the Wings of Faith and Repentance to the Throne of God's Glory? Dost thou not cast thyself into Paradise, into the Arms of Almighty God, into the Bosom of the Lord Jesus, to rest there for ever; and to be satisfy'd with the good Things which *Eye hath not seen, Ear hath not heard,* and which are not entered into the Heart of Man, but which *God hath prepared for them that love him.*

A Prayer

A Prayer and Meditation of a Christian Soul, which prepares to depart out of its Body, and comforts itself in the Contemplation of the Glory and Happiness of Paradise.

O GOD! The Author of my Being, and the Sovereign Lord of my Life, thou seest all the Motions and Dispositions of my Soul, thou knowest that I have wholly resigned myself into thy Hands, and desire nothing else but to depend upon thy good Pleasure; speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth; here I am to do thy Will, O God. As the Israelites waited for the Motion and Order to remove their Camp; so I am as ready at thy Command to leave this earthly Tabernacle. And as the golden Cherubims were always upon their Feet, their Wings stretched out, and their Faces towards the Mercy-Seat; in like manner, I desire to be in a Posture to take my Flight up to thy Mercy-Seat; to my Lord Jesus, the Propitiation for my Sins, as soon as thou shalt stretch forth thine Hand unto me, to take me out of this troubled Sea, and out of this dark Night of Affliction. I am as willing to go to thee, blessed Saviour, and to leave my ragged Garments behind, as blind Bartimeus; or as Elijah, to cast off this Mantle of the Flesh, that I may ascend unto thee in a bright Chariot of Fire. I am not grieved to quit this earthly Tabernacle, for thou hast prepared for me a more lasting Dwelling in Heaven. Let my Body return to the Dust from whence it proceeds, so that mine immortal Being, a Beam of thy Glory, may be admitted into thy Favour, Mercy and Presence, unto which it desires to return. I doubt not of thy gracious Reception of it, since thou hast promised to give the Crown of Life to all such as persevere in thy Faith and Fear, and the Rewards of Immortality, to such as fight under thy Banner, and overcome Satan, Sin, and the World. By thy Grace and Power, I have vanquished these Enemies of my Salvation; and have no other to contend with but Death. O

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strengthen me with thy Holy Spirit, that I may conquer this last Enemy; that I may find by it a Passage to thine eternal Glory and Happiness. I trust upon thy fatherly Goodness and unchangeable Affection, upon that intimate Relation with which I am honoured, and am confident thou wilt not forsake me in my urgent Necessity and Agony. Send to me thy good Angels, that they may carry me upon their Wings, and introduce me into thy heavenly Kingdom, and see thy Salvation compleat. I long to be with thee in thy celestial Jerusalem, and enter into thine holy Sanctuary, into the Society of the glorified Saints, and immortal Spirits, that minister before thy Throne. I am sensible of thy Saving Grace bestowed upon me, and mine Affections are already separated from the World; at present all my Thoughts and Expectations are with thee, my good God. Receive me into thy magnificent Palace, that I may see thy Face in Glory, and embrace my blessed Redeemer. And before I go hence, speak to my Soul in a Language answerable to its vehement Longings, and let me hear this comfortable Saying, This Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. I am already sensible of that Joy, that expects me in thy Presence, where it shall be full and compleat, of that Peace and Happiness, into which I am going apace. I have already the Fore-taste of thy heavenly Pleasures which must needs exceed all that we can say or think. I see the Heavens open, and my Lord Jesus ready to receive me. Into thy Hands I commit my Spirit, for thou hast redeemed it. Amen.



C H A P. XXIII.

The Eleventh Consolation. The glorious Resurrection of our Bodies.

WHEN God created Angels, he gave them a spiritual, and altogether celestial Nature that had no Affinity with Matter. I confess, that these

these heavenly Spirits have often appeared in human Bodies to the ancient Patriarchs: But those Bodies were extraordinary and miraculous, formed by the Power of Almighty God for such Occasions. Besides those holy Spirits were not in those Bodies as the Soul is in ours, quickning and animating them in the same Manner, but only as the Pilot is in the Ship that he governs. Therefore, as soon as they had fulfilled the Work about which they were employed by God, they left those Bodies without Prejudice to their Beings, as the Pilot leaves and goes out of the Ship when he hath brought it to the desired Haven. All the Happiness of these glorified Spirits consists in this, that God hath confirmed them in his Grace and Love, and admitted them for ever to a continual Contemplation of his glorious Face. 'Tis not so with our Souls, for altho' they be also spiritual and of an heavenly Substance, God hath not created them to be alone, and to subsist at a Distance from all Matter, but to live in the pleasant Company of those elemental Bodies, which he hath fashioned in a most artificial Manner. When he creates a human Soul, and conveys it into an organized Body, 'tis not that it should be there as Water in a Vessel, or as a King in his Palace; it lives not there as an assisting Form, or as an outward Cause of the Body's Operations; but 'tis united to it by a very strict Union, and serves as an essential Form. 'Tis the Principle of our Life, the eternal Cause of Motion, of Sense, and of Understanding. So that, to speak properly, Man cannot be said to be altogether of a spiritual Nature, as the holy Angels, nor a single Body as the Sun and Stars; but he is made up of both. Therefore, if our Souls wish to depart out of this earthly Tabernacle, 'tis not out of any Hatred of it as 'tis in itself and its proper Nature; for none ever hated his own Body, every one seeks to nourish and cherish it: But by Accident, because of the Vanity and Corruption to which Sin hath enthralled it; we desire earnestly to depart out

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of it, to a Place where Righteousness and true Holiness reign, that we might be with the Lord Jesus, to behold him nearer. 'Tis therefore an undoubted Truth, that unless the Body partakes of the same Happiness and Glory of the Soul, Man cannot be said to be perfectly and entirely happy. I confess, 'tis a great Joy to us, to know, that when our Soul casts off this earthly Body it enters into the eternal Dwellings of Heaven, whither it goes to behold the Face of the Father of Lights; but this holy Joy is disturbed with sad Reflections, and this heavenly Sweetness is strangely altered with the bitter Considerations of this poor Body cast into the Earth, and left to the Mercy of the crawling Worms. For 'tis a most hateful thing to view our Body rotting and turning to Ashes; that Body that was our Pavilion, our Palace; nay, more than so, that was half Part of ourselves. Therefore, if we will render our Joy accomplish'd, and apply an effectual Comfort to our Souls, we must nourish and entertain this pleasant Assurance, that the Ruin of our Bodies, for which we lament so much, shall not be eternal; but as our Body falls down by Death, it shall rise again one Day at the general Resurrection. This is one of the noblest and most excellent Mysteries of our Christian Religion, and one of its most glorious Advantages. The Wisdom of the World, with all its Reasonings, and the Heathen Philosophy, with its rarest Subtilties, could never attain to this wholesome and comfortable Doctrine. Therefore, when St. Paul preached to the Council of *Athens*, he was heard with Admiration, until he had spoken to them of the Resurrection; as soon as he began to mention that, they laugh'd at him.

Therefore, while *human Reason* remains in its Darkness and *natural Ignorance*, it cannot of itself find out this glorious Mystery. But as soon as 'tis enlightned with the *Light* from *above*, it discovers the most remarkable Circumstances, and acknowledgeth the *Justice* and *Necessity* of the *future Resurrection* of our Bodies.

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First, Since Rewards and Punishments ought to be proportionable and answerable to him who is to punish and reward, we must of Necessity believe the Resurrection of our Body; otherwise the Pains of the Wicked cannot be extream, and the Happiness of the Godly can never be absolute and perfect.

Secondly, As when a Traytor is executed, Men are wont to fasten to the Scaffold, or to burn in the Fire, the Instruments and Tools with which he had assaulted or offended his Prince; in the same manner, the Bodies of the prophane and impious Varlets, of the Traytors against God's Divine Majesty ought to be treated; they ought to be eternally punished with their Souls in Hell-fire, because they have been the unhappy Instruments employed in affronting their Creator.

Thirdly, The Body is not only the Instrument employed by the Wicked against God, but encourageth them, and hurries them on in Sin. For its Humours stir it up, enflame, and carry it to evil Acts. For Example, its sanguine Constitution makes it luxurious, and inclinable to the filthy Lusts of the Flesh; its Choler hurries it to violent and furious Actions; its Melancholy prompts it to the most horrid and hellish Attempts. So that if such are to be punished who cause us to perform heinous Deeds, as well as the Actors, it belongs to God's Justice to inflict upon the Body, as well as upon the Soul, eternal Punishments.

Fourthly, *To every Thing there is a Season, and a Time to every Purpose under the Heavens*, Eccles. iii. As the Bodies of the Wicked and Reprobate hath had its good Things, and its Satisfaction during this Life, it must needs have also in another Life its Punishments and its Torments.

Fifthly, But, not to forget the Reasons which have a Relation to the Faithful, and which are the Pillars and Supporters of our Faith and Hope; we may say, that Jesus Christ is no less able to save us, than Adam

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was to destroy us. Now *Adam* having lost both Soul and Body, we must conclude, that it belongs to Christ to save them both. Therefore the Body is to rise again, that it may partake of that Salvation or Redemption procured to us by this great Saviour.

Sixthly, *As we have born the Image of the first Man, who was of the Dust of the Earth, we must also bear the Image of the second Man, who came from Heaven,* 1 Cor. xv. Now we bear not this Image at present, in this Life ; we therefore must bear it in another.

Seventhly, God hath not made a Covenant with Part of Man, but with all Man, composed of Soul and Body. The Body must therefore needs rise again, that it might partake of the eternal Fruits of Glory and Happiness, which are promised to us by his divine Covenant.

Eighthly, God is not only styled, *The Father of Spirits and the God of the Spirits of all Flesh*, Heb. xii. But he declares himself to be the God of Abraham and of his Posterity, Exod. iii. 6. He is not only the God of the Soul, or the God of the Body alone ; but he is the God of believing Persons, of both their Souls and Bodies. From hence it necessarily follows, That the Bodies of such as are deceased, are not utterly destroyed, for God will raise them up again. With this Argument Christ stopped the Mouths of the Sadducees, who denied the Resurrection, *Concerning the Resurrection of the Dead*, said he, *Have you not read what God himself speaks to you? I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob ; God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living.*

Ninthly, God hath adopted us to himself by Jesus Christ, according to the good Pleasure of his Will, to make us the Heirs of his Kingdom, and Co-heirs of his Son. From this Passage we may gather a certain Assurance of the Resurrection ; for when this Father of Mercies shall see our Bodies lying in the Dust, out of his Tenderness and Compassion, he will say, These are the Bodies of my Children, the Members of mine
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only Son. 'Tis not convenient to leave them always in that shameful State, in the Bowels of the Earth. That love that I bear to them cannot suffer it. Doubtless 'twas this Consideration that caused the Apostle to call the Redemption of our Bodies *Adoption*; for by that he assures us, that he shall fetch out of their Graves the Bodies of all them, whom he hath adopted; and that our future Resurrection is an effect, and a necessary Consequence of our Adoption.

Tenthly, If we consider Death in itself, as 'tis in its own Nature, we shall find it to be the Wages of Sin, and a Punishment of our Crimes. Now Jesus Christ hath paid for us these Wages, and satisfied for all our Sins, abolishing them in his Cross. We may therefore conclude, that Death is to be destroyed in respect of Believers, and that their Bodies must needs rise again.

Eleventhly, St. Paul assures us, that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of his Body. Now the mystical Body of this great God and Redeemer, consists not only in the infinite Number of Souls purchased with his Blood, but also in the Union of all the Bodies, that have been the Companions of these blessed Souls: Therefore as he hath saved our Souls from spiritual Death and eternal Damnation, he must also save our Bodies from corporal Death, and redeem them from the Power of the Grave.

Twelfthly, If Death did for ever detain our Bodies in the Grave, we could not say, to speak properly, that our Saviour hath swallowed up Death into Victory, and that he hath destroyed the Sepulchre; for in such a Case Death and the Grave would remain victorious, and triumph eternally over these miserable Bodies.

Thirteenthly, Our Saviour hath suffered in his Soul and in his Body, and by that means hath purchased to himself both our Souls and Bodies, according to St. Paul's excellent Intimation, *You are bought with a Price, glorify therefore God in your Bodies, and in your Souls,*

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that belong unto God. From hence we must conclude, that this glorious Saviour would be deprived of Part of that which he hath purchased by his inestimable Sufferings, if our Bodies always continued in the Power of Death.

Fourteentbly, The Holy Ghost hath sanctified our Bodies and made them his Temples as *St. Paul* teacheth us, *Know ye not that you are the Temples of God, and that the Holy Ghost dwelleth in you?* From hence the Resurrection of our Bodies must needs follow as a necessary Consequence. For can we imagine that God will suffer the Temple of his Holiness to continue for ever in its Ruins and Desolations? Will he not rear up again the noble Pavilion of his Glory, cast down by Death?

Fifteentbly, God hath predestinated us to make us conformable to the Image of his Son, that he might be the first-born amongst many Brethren. Now the Soul and the Body of this only begotten of the Father, that were separated by Death, have been joyned again in his glorious Resurrection, and received into Heaven. Therefore our Souls, that depart out of the World to enter into Paradise, must return again to their Bodies, that we may ascend up to Heaven both in Soul and Body. All the Difference that appears between Christ and us, is, that the precious Body of our noble Captain, could not be subject to Corruption, but was raised again as soon as it fell, because of that strict and personal Union, between his Humanity and Divinity; whereas the most Part of all other Bodies are corrupted and reduced to Ashes.

Sixteentbly, We have the same Holy Spirit, and divine Virtue dwelling in us, which was in our Lord Jesus Christ, the efficient Cause of his Resurrection altho' not in the same Measure and Degree; therefore it will produce in us the same Effect, and raise our Bodies also from the Dust. *St. Paul* makes use of this Reason in the viiith of the *Romans*, *If the Spirit of him that raiseth up Jesus from the Dead, dwelleth in you, he*
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that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Seventeenthly, The dead Body that touched the Bones of the Prophet *Elisha* revived again on a sudden. We have more Cause to expect the Resurrection of our Bodies, because our Bodies dont only touch Jesus Christ, dead and risen again, but we are become one Body with him, Flesh of his Flesh, and Bone of his Bone: I am (said he) *The Resurrection and the Life, he that liveth and believeth in me shall never die; and he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.* Eph. v. Joh. xi.

Eighteenthly, God hath imprinted upon our Bodies his own Signet, and the Marks of his Love; he hath given them visible and palpable Assurances of their future blessedness. Under the *Old Testament*, Believers carried the *Seal* of the Covenant of God in their Flesh; for Circumcision was the Seal of the Righteousness obtained by Faith and Hope of the blessed Immortality. They also eat the Flesh of the paschal Lamb which was a Type of Jesus Christ, the true Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World. Likewise under the *new Covenant*, God consecrates to himself our Bodies by the *Waters of Baptism*, and by the *Bread and Wine* of the *Lord's Supper*: So by this Means he assures them of a joyful and glorious Resurrection. For if by eating of this Bread, and drinking of this Wine, we eat and drink spiritually the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Christ, it is an infallible Assurance, that this divine Saviour will raise us up again at the End of the World, as he himself promiseth; *Who so eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal Life and I will raise him up at the last Day,* John vi. 54.

Nineteenthly, The Body of Believers endures many Assaults and Evils for Christ's sake, and for his holy Profession. 'Tis often exposed to the most shameful and most cruel Torments, and partakes in the same Sufferings as he did on Earth. Therefore 'tis just that it should partake in his Triumphs, Glory and eternal Happiness

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Happiness, *It is a faithful Saying ; for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him ; if we suffer we shall also reign with him. We always bear about in our Bodies the dying of our Lord Jesus, that the Life of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal Flesh, 2 Tim. ii. 2 Cor. iv.*

Twentiethly, there is nothing that God doth in vain, he never bestows upon us useles desires ; therefore to what purpose hath he kindled in us such an earnest Longing to see this wretched Body out of the Misery and Corruption, unto which Sin hath subjected it, and in the Fruition of Glory and Immortality? As St. Paul tells us in these Words, *The Creature was made subject to Vanity not willingly, but by Reason of him who hath subjected the same in Hope, because the Creature itself also shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God.* He adds immediately after, *For we know that the whole Creation groaneth, and travaileth in Pain together until now ; and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first Fruits of the Spirit ; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of our Body, Rom. viii.*

Finally, Since whatsoever God hath appointed in his eternal Counsel, must be fulfilled in Time, and all Things in the World attain to those Ends for which he made them, and since he created our Souls not to be alone, but to live in the Company and Fellowship with the Body ; therefore this Body, which falls down by Death must needs arise again at the Resurrection, that the immortal Soul might return to, and dwell with it for ever.

To say that the Resurrection of our Bodies is impossible, is the greatest and most abominable Atheism in the World. 'Tis Impudence to deny the infinite Power of God, and the sacred History of the World's Creation. For if Things are in their Beings, as they are in Workings, and if their Operations are correspondent to their Natures, we must of Necessity conclude ; that if there be a God of an infinite Being, he must needs have a Power answerable to his Being ;
and

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and by Consequence, that this Almighty God, may without Difficulty, raise the Dead. If thou believest that God calls the Things that are not as if they were; wherefore do'st thou not also believe, that this same God will also call the Things that have been already, to restore them to that being which they have formerly enjoyed from his Almighty Hand? If thou believest that God hath fashioned *Eve* out of one of her Husband's Ribs, that he made Man of the Dust, and created this Dust out of Nothing, can'st thou not also believe, that God is able at the Day of the Resurrection to make again thy Body of that Dust into which 'tis reduced by Death? If thou believest that God hath breathed into *Adam's* Nostrils the Breath of Life, that he hath created thy Soul, and infused it into thy Body, where it was never before, how canst thou question his Power, of returning one Day the same Soul into the same Body, where it formerly made its Abode? In short, if thou believest that the Holy Ghost by moving upon the Waters, hath caused so many beautiful and noble Creatures to appear, and that he hath made Light to shine out of Darkness, can'st thou not be also persuaded, that this same Holy Ghost, can shew his Power amongst the Graves, and fetch the Body out of the dark Shadows of Death, to introduce it into the Light of the Living?

Thou seest by Experience, that every Day a new House is built up of old Materials, and dost thou wonder how the Wise Architect, who hath built the great World by his Word alone, can gather up the old pieces and Materials of this little World, to make up a new building, adorned with divine Graces and Beauty? Shall the Statue-maker be able to restore again his bruised Image reduced to Ashes, and shall not God be able to restore Man, created after his own Image and Likeness, to his primitive State and Being? In a Word, let the Difficulties seem never so great, remember (Christian Soul) what the Angel *Gabriel* told the blessed Virgin, *With God nothing shall be impossible.*

I know

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I know very well that this is an old Maxim in Philosophy; *From Privation of the Habit there is no Returning.* That is to say, when once we are depriv'd of, and have lost a natural Faculty, 'tis never to be recovered again. But the prophane Atheists, wrongfully abuse this Maxim against the Article of our Resurrection, for 'tis most true in Respect of natural and secondary Cause. 'Tis not to be doubted, that when the Faculties of Nature are once lost, they are not to be restor'd by human Art or Skill; and when a Man is dead, 'tis not possible for all the Creatures to bring him to Life again: But nothing is able to limit the Power of an infinite Agent. He that hath formed the wonderful Eye, and in whom we live, move and have our being; cannot he open the Eyes of a Man born blind, and restore Life to a dead Corps? This same Philosophy, whereof the Maxims are brought against the Resurrection, declares openly, *That God can do all Things that imply no Contradiction.* Now there is no Contradiction in believing that God can render Life to him that had lost it; and that what is fallen down by Death, should rise again by the Resurrection. To the End that this Resurrection of our Bodies might seem less strange, God hath been pleased to give us in Nature many Images and Resemblances. I am persuaded (*believing Souls*) that you will not be displeased if I mention here some of the Chief.

1st. As when the Sun goeth down, and the Earth is covered with the dark Shadows of the Night, Man's Declining and the Darknes of the Grave is represented: Likewise, when this King of the Stars rises, when he brings with him the Day over our Heads; there is a beautiful and perfect Image of the Resurrection.

Secondly, When the Moon parts with all its Light and Splendour, which it borrows from the Sun, when it covers itself with a Veil of Darknes, 'tis the Image of Death, and a Representation of that Veil which it draws over our Eyes; but when the Sun begins

begins to look upon it again, and by that Means it recovers its former brightness and glory, it discovers before our Eyes in a manner, that which shall happen to our Bodies, when the Sun of Righteousness shall rise and cast upon them his favourable Aspect.

Thirdly, The Spring, Summer and Autumn, follow one another, and the Winter shews us an Image of Death. But when the Sun begins to return again over our Heads, when it covers the Earth with a beautiful Green and revives the sleeping Virtue of Nature, it expresseth to us the Resurrection in lively Colours.

Fourthly, The Trees that are in Winter without Flowers, Fruits or Leaves, discover to us the hideous Aspect of Death, that strips Man's Body, and deprives him of all that is beautiful and pleasant to the Eye. But when the same Trees flourish again, and are laden with fresh Leaves and Fruits, they put us in mind of the blessed Resurrection of our Bodies.

Fifthly, The Seeds that corrupt and rot in the Ground, represent our Bodies rotting in the Grave; but when the Seeds appear above Ground and flourish, they express excellently well the blessed State of our Bodies, rising again to a new Life, and recovering a perfect Beauty. This Similitude the Son of God himself recommends to us: *If a Grain of Wheat which falls to the Earth, doth not die, it remains alone; but if it dies, it brings forth much Fruit*, John xii. And the Apostle St. Paul insists at large upon this Comparison; thereupon he exclaims against the stupid Atheists, who will not believe that a dead Body can revive again: *O Fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die*, 1 Cor. xv.

Sixthly, I find more wonderful what is said of certain Herbs, which rise again out of their Ashes; for Example, if you burn *Mugwort*, in *lat. Artemisia*, to Ashes, and cast the Ashes upon the Earth, you shall see the same Herb grow again. Many have tried and found this by Experience: The same is reported of a Kind of Palm-tree; and because in the Greek *φοινίξ*, a Palm,

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Palm, is called *Phœnix*, this Experiment hath given Occasion to the Fable of the *Phœnix*, a Bird that is said to revive again out of its own Marrow and Ashes. Who will offer to deny, that this is an excellent Expression of the Resurrection of our Bodies?

Seventhly, There are also several Sorts of Insects, that represent to us Death and the Resurrection: As the Silk-worms; for when these small Creatures have finished their Work, and spun out that Silk with which the Garments and stately Attire of Kings and Princes are made, they bury themselves in a Tomb which they built; afterwards they become like a little Bean, which hides under its thin Skin the Formation of a white Butterfly. The same is observed of the Caterpillars, for when they seem to be stark dead, they creep out of their little Sepulchres in the Form of Butterflies, of so many rare and various Colours, that they deserve Admiration; so that many curious Persons keep them in their Closets amongst their Rarities.

Eighthly, Amongst the Beasts also, some seem to be dead for several Months of the Year, being without Sense or Motion; but afterwards they awake again, or rather they begin a new Life to move about as they did before.

Ninthly, But we need go no farther than ourselves to find the Image of Death and of the Resurrection. For is there any Thing that can express Death more perfectly than our dead Sleep, that stupifies the Senses, puts a stop to the Spirits of our Bodies, and binds up our most active Faculties? So that we have then Eyes without seeing, Ears without hearing, a Nose and cannot smell, and a living Body but we have no feeling. But as soon as such a Person comes to awaken again, to open his Eyes, and stir and to act, he represents a most perfect Image of the Resurrection.

I might also add amongst the Images of Death and the Resurrection, the several Changes and Alterations that happen to the *States* and *Empires* of the World. For oft-times they appear as dead and buried, but afterwards

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terwards they rise again from their Falls, and march out of their Obscurity, as in a glorious Resurrection. But I shall wave these Similitudes, and consider only such as the *Church* of God in several Ages hath recommended to us as Types of the future Resurrection of our Bodies.

First, *Noah* and his Family, (in which all the Church of God at that Time was comprehended) remained in the Ark as in a floating Coffin, during the Space of one hundred and fifty Days. But after the Deluge, God caused them to march out of that Ark. In the same Manner, after our Bodies shall have been in the Graves so many Years or Ages (as God hath appointed in his wonderful Wisdom) he will draw them out again by his infinite Power, and will say to us all, *Come forth and appear to Judgment.*

Secondly, The People of *Israel* went down into *Egypt*, and dwelt there 200 Years or thereabouts, as in a Kind of Sepulchre, but God deliver'd them at last, and caused them to go up to the Land of *Canaan* as by a blessed Resurrection.

Thirdly, The *Red Sea*, into which this People went down, and in which *Pharoah* with all his Host was drowned, is an Image of our Grave, and the great Power of God discovered to make this People pass thro' that dreadful Sea, and to go up out of its Depths, as by a Miracle, shews to the blindest Understandings, that Omnipotence which God will one Day manifest in drawing his People out of the Depths of Death, that we may be able to sing the Song of *Moses* and of the *Lamb*.

Fourthly, When the *Ark* of God's Covenant was taken Captive by the *Philistines*, and shut up in the House of *Dagon*, it was a Type of those Bodies which God hath chosen for his *Ark*, and which are to remain for a time in Satan's Prisons, under the Command of Death.

But when the *Philistines* sent back again this *Ark*, and that the Children of *Israel* received it with outward Expressions of great Joy, 'tis a plain Description of that

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that which shall happen, when God shall oblige Death to open all its Prisons, and release all its Prisoners? A Description, I say, of the wonderful Joy of the Inhabitants of the *celestial Canaan*.

Fifthly, *Babylon* also, where the *Church of Israel* remained Captive Threescore and ten Years, is a symbolical Representation of the Grave, where these miserable Bodies are to continue in Captivity. Therefore in Allusion, the Prophet styles it, *a Lake without Water*; but the Deliverance of *Israel* from the *Babylonish* Captivity, is a Type of our *Glorious Resurrection*. For that Reason the holy Men of God speak of it in such Terms as have respect to the Resurrection of our Bodies from the Grave.

Sixthly, *Solomon's Temple*, that was demolished and pulled down by *Nebuchadnezzar*, and that lay many Years in a desolate Condition, is another Type of the Bodies of Believers destroyed by the Devil, and remaining for a Time in the Dust. But when the *Jews* were returned from *Babylon*, they reared up the Walls of this Temple, and built it again. This represents the Resurrection of our Bodies, the Temple of our Living God. Our Saviour had an Eye to this Allusion, when he told the *Jews*, *Destroy this Temple, and I will build it up again in three Days*: For his beloved Disciple adds immediately after, that he spoke of the Temple of his Body.

Seventhly, You may find the Types and Images of the same thing in many of the Faithful, in *Joseph*, *Daniel* and *Jonas*. For as the Prisons of *Egypt*, the *Lion's Den*, and the *Whale's Belly*, represent the Graves; likewise, when *Darius* caused *Daniel* to be taken out of the Den, and when God ordered the *Whale* to cast up *Jonas* upon the dry Ground, the Resurrection is thereby described.

Eighthly, But there is no Passage, Type nor Figure, more plain in the *Old Testament*, concerning the Resurrection than that of the xxxviith. of *Ezekiel*.
For

For that the Children of *Israel* might understand the Greatness of God's Power, able to free them from the *Babylonish* Captivity, he caused the Resurrection of the Dead to appear before his Prophet. He carried him away into a large Field, cover'd all over with dead and dry Bones. At God's Command these Bones drew near to one another, and began to be joined; afterwards the Sinews appeared, the Flesh covered them, and the Skin was stretched over them; then a Breath came from the four Winds upon these dead Bodies, entred into them; and they rose up alive upon their Feet, so that they seemed as a great Army.

But God hath not only represented the Resurrection by many illustrious and excellent Types, but he hath also expressly foretold it by the holy Prophets: *Isaiab* speaks of this Mystery in an excellent Manner, *Thy dead Men shall live together, with my dead Body shall they rise; awake and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust, for thy Dew is as the Dew of Herbs, and the Earth shall cast out the Dead*, Isa. xxvi. And there can be nothing plainer than the Prophecy of the Prophet *Daniel*, *And many of them that slept in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt*, Dan. xii.

Therefore in Hopes of the Resurrection, the Patriarchs were very careful of their Tombs. *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, had no Inheritance in the Land of *Canaan*, and yet he was very desirous to buy, for himself and Family, a Burying-place. When *Jacob*, lay upon his Death-bed, he commanded his Son *Joseph*, *Deal kindly and truly with me, bury me not I pray thee in Egypt; but I will lie with my Fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their Burying-place*, Gen. xlvii. And when *Joseph* was ready to yield up his Soul unto God, he told his Brethren, *That God would surely visit them, and that they should carry his Bones from thence*, Gen. l.

All the Faithful of the *Old Testament* have publickly declared their Expectation of this blessed Resurrection

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from the Dead; as may appear by that notable Passage of *Job*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another's*, *Job xxi.* As may also appear by the magnificent Words of *David*, *I will behold thy Face in Righteousness, I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy Likeness*, *Psal. xvii.*

Those blessed Martyrs mentioned in the Book of *Maccabees*, were so well persuaded of this Doctrine, that they had the Courage willingly to offer their Bodies to Death and Torments the most dreadful. You may hear one speaking boldly to King *Antiochus*, that most cruel Tyrant, who would have forced him to break the Law of God, *Thou Murderer, thou deprivest us of Life, but the King of the World shall raise us up at the Resurrection, to an eternal Life, since we die for his Laws.* Another animated with an holy Zeal and an heroick Spirit, delivers his Tongue and Hands to be cut off, with this Saying, *I have received these Things from Heaven, but I now despise them for the Laws of my God, for I hope he will restore them to me again.* A third flighting the Tyrant's Threats and Promises, uttered these excellent Sayings; *It is better for me to leave the Expectations of Men to look for what God promises, that I may again rise by his Power.* But nothing appears more admirable than the Mother of those illustrious Children, when speaking to the seventh, the youngest of all, she uses this Language; *I know not how you were formed in my Womb, for I never gave you a Spirit, nor Life, nor gathered together your Limbs into a Body; but the Creator of the World, the Author of Nature, who by his Power and Goodness has formed the Beginning of all Things; he will of his Mercy restore to you again your Spirit and Life, because you now value not yourselves for the Sake of his Laws.*

Martha, the Sister of *Lazarus*, was well acquainted with this Mystery, as is to be proved by what she told

our

our Saviour Christ, *I know that my Brother shall rise again at the Resurrection at the last Day.* And the Pharisees maintain'd the Belief of the Resurrection from the Dead against the Sadducees, who denied the Resurrection and Immortality of the Soul. Therefore when St. Paul was to answer for himself before the Jews Tribunal, where half were Pharisees, and half were Sadducees, he made this Profession, *I am a Pharisee, and the Son of a Pharisee; for the Hope of the Resurrection of the Dead I am called in Question:* And when he made his Apology before Felix, the Governour, he spoke in this Manner, *This I confess unto thee, that after the Way which they call Heresy, I worship the God of my Fathers, believing all Things which are written in the Law and the Prophets, and have Hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a Resurrection of the Dead, both of the Just and of the Unjust.*

As the Jews of our Time have forsaken God, God hath also forsaken and given them over to a reprobate Sense; for as they set aside the infinite Merits of the Death and Passion of Jesus Christ, they vainly persuade themselves, that their Sins are sufficiently expiated by their own Deaths. Notwithstanding the grievous Corruptions that are to be found in their Doctrines, they depart out of this Life, in Hopes of rising again one Day. For that Reason they are careful in washing their dead Bodies, in burying them with Honour and Decency: And when they have thus laid them in their Graves, they bow themselves three times towards the Earth, and cast behind them Grass newly pluckt up from the Ground. By which Ceremony, they would have us understand, that the Corps which they lay in the Earth, shall one Day rise again and push forth, according to the Prophet's Expression, *Your Bones shall grow as the Grass.*

But this Article of the Resurrection of our Bodies, which is found in some few Passages of the *Old Testament*, is to be seen almost in every Page of the *New*, and the Texts concerning this Truth, are so plain and

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exprefs, that 'tis not poffible to reject this wholefome Doctrin, but we muft at the fame time abjure the Chriftian Religion, and give the Lye to the Holy Ghoft.

That our Faith might be the better fettled, God has been pleas'd not only to publifh the Refurrection from the Dead by his Prophets and Apoftles, he hath not only discover'd to us many excellent and delightful Types and Figures of the Truth; but to give us a more experimental Testimony of his Power, he hath rais'd feveral from the Dead. In the *Old Testament* God rais'd up two Children, one at the Prayers of the Prophet *Elijah*, the other at the Request of *Elifha*, his Succellor, *1 Kings* xvii. And when the dead Body had been laid in *Elifha's* Grave, and touch'd his Bones, it return'd to Life again, *2 Kings* xiii. And during our Saviour's Abode on Earth, he rais'd to Life the Daughter of *Jairus*, that was dead; the Widow's Son of *Nain*, who was carried out of the Gate to be buried; and *Lazarus*, who had been four Days lying in his Grave; whofe Body began to ftink, *Matth.* ix. *Luke* vii. When this merciful Saviour gave up the Ghoft upon the Crofs, *The Graves were opened, and many Bodies of Saints which fleep arofe, and came out of the Graves, after his Refurrection, and went into the holy City, and appeared unto many*, *Matth.* xxvii. After his Afcenfion, he rais'd from the Dead, *Dorcas*, a charitable Widow, at the Prayers of *St. Peter*, to comfort the poor Widows that wept for her; and a young Man named *Eutyches*, was reftor'd to Life by the Means of *St. Paul*, that the Congregation of Believers might be comforted, who were troubled at his unexpected Fall, and fudden Death.

But chiefly we have the Example of our Lord, who hath rais'd himfelf up by a divine Power. This glorious Inftance, is able not only to excite our Admiration, but alfo to settle our Faith, and nourifh our Hopes: For the Refurrection of other Perfons fhews what God can do, but the Refurrection of Chrift declares to us what God will do, and is an Earneft to af-fure us of our future Refurrection. 'Tis not poffible

to believe as we ought, that Jesus Christ is risen from the Dead, but we must also, by a necessary Consequence, believe that he will raise us likewise. This St. Paul endeavours to teach us, *If we believe that Jesus Christ is dead and risen, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him,* 1 Thess. iv. As the Head is, so shall the Members be. As the First-fruits are, so shall the Rest of the Harvest be. The same Apostle labours to persuade this Truth in these excellent Words, *Christ is risen from the Dead, and become the First-fruits of them that slept; for since by Man came Death, by Man came also the Resurrection of the Dead; for as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive: But every Man in his own order, Christ the First-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his Coming.*

Against this holy and divine Doctrine some object, That there are Bodies consumed by Fire, and burnt to Ashes. But what follows from hence? For whether the Bodies be reduc'd to Dust or Ashes, it matters not, God is able to restore them, and render to them their primitive Forms. Since certain Herbs (consumed to Ashes) rise again out of the Ground by a natural Inclination, as we have already observed; and since Art is so industrious to make transparent Bodies (of an extraordinary Beauty) of melted Ashes; shall not God, who is so infinitely above all Abilities of Nature created by him, and of all Arts and Sciences which proceed from his Direction, be able of Ashes to compose a beautiful and perfect Body?

Others pretend next, that a great many Bodies have been drowned in the Seas, and swallowed up in the Waters. I acknowledge that to be true: But I affirm, that God is altogether as able to draw a Body out of the Depth of the Sea, as out of the Bowels of the Earth. He who hath prescribed Bounds to this great Sea, who dries up its vast Concavities, and lays open its bottomless Bottom; hath not he a Command over this Sea? Cannot he oblige it to restore those Bodies that have been committed to its keeping, as when he

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commanded the Whale to bring again to Land the Prophet *Jonas*, whom it had swallowed up alive?

Some object, that there are Bodies devour'd by the Beasts, which have been their Food, and have been turn'd into their Substance. But this Objection is not to be valu'd. For when a human Body shall have pass'd thro' the Bowels of the Beasts, and been chang'd a thousand and a thousand times into their Substance, there is nothing that can hinder God from restoring them again at the Day of the Resurrection. For those Animals shall never rise again; 'tis therefore nothing to the Purpose to enquire after them, when the Body shall re-assume that which they shall have devoured, and turned into their own Substance. The strongest and most plausible Objection concerns the *Anthropophagi*, the Eaters of Men. For 'tis very well known, that in the *Indies* there are some Savages so barbarous as to feed upon human Flesh, and to esteem it as their greatest Dainties. Some answer to this, that such kind of Inhumanities are not ordinary, and that such wretched *Indians* never practise such heinous Things but in urgent Necessity, or when they purpose to revenge themselves upon their Enemies. But such as have given an Account of the *New-found America*, relate, That in some Provinces, There have been such cruel and inhuman Savages, as not only to devour the Flesh of their Enemies whom they sacrificed to their Idols, but also of their dearest Friends, whom they cut in Pieces in their Shambles. These same Historians tell us, That some of the barbarous People are so impiously mistaken, as to reckon it an Act of Piety and Duty to their Parents and Friends, to give them a Sepulchre in their own Stomachs. Again, they say, that there are some, who like so many mad Dogs feed upon Infants, and hunt after Men, as we do after wild Beasts of the Field. In case all these Relations should be true, I must desire my Reader to take notice there are two Kinds of Parts that compose the human Body, the one solid, as the Bones and Nerves, and so essential

essential to it, that without them it would cease from being any longer a humane Body; the other Parts are adventitious, accidental and changeable, they serve to maintain it almost as the Food and Nourishment. Now, this I affirm, as an undoubted Truth, that when it happens that Men feed upon their own Kind, God takes care, by his wonderful Providence, that the essential and solid Parts of the Man devoured, never enter into the Substance or Composition of the solid Parts of the Devourer. At the great Day of the Resurrection, the Bodies will re-assume all their essential and solid Parts, without which they cannot be true Bodies; but they shall not need the accidental and fluid Parts, as are the Humours and Blood; for then they shall have no more inward Heat to consume them, and no more Hunger and Thirst. Therefore they shall never have any need of Meat or of Drink, or of any other things whatsoever, to serve them instead of Nourishment. Let the Metals be never so much mingled, the Goldsmith separates them with Ease. Thus, let our humane Bodies be never so much altered and shuffled together, God will be able enough to separate and distinguish them one from another, When the Goldsmith will separate the Metals, he casts them into the Melting-pot, and causeth them to pass through the Fire; but God, who can do all things without Means, hath no need of the Fire, or the Melting-pot; for by his Word, at the twinkling of an Eye, he can cause this Separation to be made; and render to every Body, that which necessarily belongs to its Composition. In a Word, if the Difficulty should be far greater than 'tis, and if the Resolution of this Objection were not so easy to be made, it should not lessen our Faith, or cause us to doubt of the Resurrection of our Bodies.

When it concerns things that the holy Scripture doth not expressly declare and decide, or that cannot be drawn from it by necessary Consequence, 'tis lawful to dispute either for, or against such Things; but if it

concerns such as this sacred Writ inspired of God, plainly set forth, our Faith must learn her Duty, to submit to Almighty God, and believe that there is nothing impossible with him. Now this Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead is so expressly and plainly found in this holy Scripture, that it seems as visible as the Beams of the Noon-Sun. Many Questions are made upon this Subject, ; some are of that Importance, that an Answer will give Satisfaction upon this excellent Subject. First they enquire by whom, and by whose Power shall the Resurrection be effected? The Scripture gives an Occasion to make this Inquiry, for it ascribes it sometimes to the Father, as in *John v. The Father raises the Dead, and quickens them*; sometimes to the Son, as in *Phil. iii. Jesus Christ shall change our vile Bodies according to his mighty Working, whereby he is able to subdue all Things unto himself*; and sometimes to the Holy Ghost, as in *Rom. viii. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the Dead dwelleth in you, he that hath raised up Jesus from the Dead, shall quicken your mortal Bodies by his Holy Spirit that dwelleth in you*. This Difficulty may be thus resolved; all the outward Works of God, that concern the Creatures, are common to the Three Persons of the most Holy, most Glorious, and most Wonderful TRINITY.

So that we shall rise again by the infinite Power of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless, the Resurrection is especially ascribed to the Son, as he is Judge of the Quick and the Dead. In order to the Discharge of that glorious Employment, all Power hath been committed to him in Heaven, and in Earth, and in the Seas.

2. Some enquire farther, When shall this Resurrection be? I answer, That it shall be in the Day which God hath appointed to judge all the World, by the Man whom he hath ordained, *Acts xvii*. You are not to expect from me, *Christians*, that I should point out to you precisely the Day when this shall come to pass,

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for it belongs not to us to know the Times and the Seasons, which God hath reserved to himself. 'Tis true, we may see the most Part of the Prophecies are already fulfilled, so that we may say in general Terms, *The Lord is at hand, and our Salvation is nearer than when we believed*, Phil. iv. Rom. xiii.

Nevertheless, I cannot undertake, to mark out unto you this glorious Day, nor to tell you the Year nor Age when this shall be. There is no Man upon Earth, nor Angel in Heaven, that is able to speak of it with Certainty. Therefore Jesus Christ himself informs us, *But of that Day and Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Angels of Heaven, but my Father only*, Mat. xxiv. If our Saviour saith more, *That the Son himself knoweth not the Day*, Mark xiii. We must understand this as he is a Man, and during his Abode in the World; for as he is God, he knoweth all Things from all Eternity. And now that he is glorified, as he is Man, he understands all Things. But he hath hid from Men the Time of his Coming, that we might expect him at every Moment. As he tells the holy Apostles, *Watch therefore, for ye know not what Hour the Lord doth come; but know this, that if the good Man of the House had known in what Watch the Thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his House to be broken up*, Mat. xxiv. He writes in the same Language to the Angel of the Church of Sardis; *Remember how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent; if therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come to thee as a Thief, and thou shalt not know what Hour I will come upon thee*. The first Christians were very well acquainted with this wholesome Doctrine, as we may judge by this Passage of St. Paul to the Thessalonians; *But of the Times and of the Seasons, Brethren, you have no Need that I write unto you, for your selves know perfectly, that the Day of the Lord so cometh as a Thief in the Night. For when they shall say Peace and Safety, then sudden Destruction cometh upon them, as Travail upon a Woman with Child, and they shall not escape*, 1 Thes. v. As the Days of Noah were, so shall

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shall be the coming of the Son of Man. For as they were before the Deluge, eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in Marriage, and were not sensible of the Deluge, untill it was come and carried them all away, so shall it be at the Coming of the Son of Man, *Mat. xxv.*

The wise Man tells us, *That Hope delayed causeth the Heart to languish*, Prov. xiii. But we must except the Hope and Expectation of the Resurrection; for tho' this blessed Resurrection should not come to pass yet many thousand Ages, it should not cause such as die in the Lord to languish. For while their Bodies are in their Graves, they suffer nothing; and as they are there without Sense, they cannot be impatient, no more than a Man that is in a deep Sleep. For the Soul enjoys in the Contemplation of God's Face, such unspeakable Satisfaction, that 'tis not capable of Grief, Sorrow, Displeasure, or the least Disturbance, *St. Peter* tells us, *That a thousand Years with God, are but as a Day*, 2 Pet. iii. We may say the same of those who are admitted to God's glorious Presence to behold his Face; for a thousand Years, in such an happy State, appears less than one Day in this miserable Condition. The Hundreds and Thousands of Years pass away far quicker to the blessed Inhabitants of Heaven, than the Moments to such as live in Troubles upon Earth.

3. Others desire to know where this Resurrection shall happen. The Jewish Whimsies and Extravagancies have given Occasion to this Question; for they think that the dead Bodies rise in no other Place but the holy Land. Therefore they have made another childish Fable, that the Bodies of all their Nation, that die in several Parts of the World, shall go through earthly Vaults, and roll through the secret Conveyances of this Globe, until they come to the Land of *Canaan*, where they are to arise from the Dead. And as one Errour occasions another, they say further, That they shall feel more or less Pain in their Passage, according to the Goodness, or Sins of their Lives. I need not

not spend any time in the Refutation of this foolish and impertinent Opinion; but it may justly cause us to acknowledge the just Judgment of God, upon this unhappy People, who have refused with a devilish Obstinacy, the great Saviour of the World. For because they have not received the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved, God hath sent them strong Delusions, that they might believe a Lye, and hath given them over to a reprobate Sense, *2 Thess. ii.* For us Christians, we say that without so much adoe, where the Body is at the last Day, there it shall rise from its Grave.

4. The next Question is, what shall rise from the Dead? I answer, that the Same Body which falls by Death, shall rise again at the general Resurrection. If God should make a new Body to join it to our Souls, it would be no more a Resurrection, but rather a new Creation; neither shall we only take such a Body as our own, for Things that are only alike, are not the same, let them be never so much alike; but we shall take again the same Body, which our Soul animates during its Abode here below; and if I may make use of the Expressions and Terms of Divines, it shall not only be the same Body, but also the same Individual. As in the first Resurrection God creates not a new Soul, but he regenerates and sanctifies that which was Dead in its Trespases and Sins; thus in the second Resurrection, God makes not another Body, but he only bestows another Life upon that which was lying in Corruption, and amongst the Dead. As when our Saviour rose from the Dead, he made not for himself a new Body, but he took again that same which had been formed in the Womb of the blessed Virgin: Likewise, in the general Resurrection, he will not create for us new Bodies, but he will restore to us that same which we had from our Mother's Womb. This Argument is not to be answer'd; For the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, is not only the efficient or meritorious Cause of ours, but also, the Pattern and Model, or as the

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the School-men tell us, 'tis the exemplary Cause of our future Resurrection. But there is no Need of Arguments, when the Word of God is so clear and express on this Subject. St. Paul informs us, *That the Lord shall change our vile Body, that this corruptible must put on Incorruption, this mortal must put on Immortality*, Phil. iii, 1 Cor. xv. And that the Life of Jesus shall be made manifest in our mortal Flesh, 2 Cor. iv. And the holy Job saith, Job xix. not only that he shall see God, but that he shall see God in his Flesh, and that he shall see him with his Eyes: For the same Reason, in some ancient Copies, in our Apostle's Creed, as in the Creed of Aquila, I find not only, *I believe the Resurrection of the Flesh*, but *I believe the Resurrection of this Flesh*.

5. Some ask whether the Bodies of the Wicked shall rise from the Dead, as well as the Bodies of the Righteous? The *Jews*, who delight in whimsical Inventions, fancy a Resurrection only for the Just, in which, Unbelievers and Reprobates have no Share. To strengthen this Dream, they abuse the Words of the first Psalm, *The Wicked shall not stand in Judgment, nor Sinners in the Congregation of the Righteous*. Finally, They are so much besotted with an high Conceit of themselves, that none are righteous but of their own Nation; that none are pleasing to God, or ought to rise again from the Dead, but the *Israelites*. But we Christians are brought up and instructed in better Doctrines; we believe without Hesitation, that all Men that are dead since the Beginning of the World, of every People and Nation under Heaven, shall rise again at the Day of Judgment. For St. Paul assures us, *That there shall be a Resurrection of the Just and of the Unjust*. David in his first Psalm, speaks nothing against this Truth, which is as clear as the Sun, and as infallible as the Heavens and the Earth; for he saith not that the Wicked shall not rise again, but only that they shall not stand before God in Judgment, that is to say, that they shall not subsist before the Tribunal of God's Justice, nor be able to abide the fiery Presence

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sence of God, angry and displeased for their Impieties. But this we may observe, that altho' God will raise up all the Men of the World, without Exception, from their Graves, there shall be a notable Difference between them; for he will raise the Wicked up, and draw them out of their Graves, as a Judge drags an Offender out of his Dungeon to sentence him to Death. But he will raise again Believers as their Redeemer, that their Bodies as well as their Souls, might enjoy the blessed Fruits of the Redemption, purchased for us. Therefore this divine Saviour styles them, *Children of the Resurrection*; for none but they shall inherit his Blessings, and partake of his eternal Glory.

6. Some inquire further, in what Manner shall this Resurrection be? I answer, that our Lord and Saviour shall come down from Heaven, cloathed with Light and Glory, and attended upon by the Angels of his Power, and Millions of his Saints. He shall be preceded by the Cry of the Arch-Angel and the Trumpet of God; for the Trumpet shall sound; and as at the Sounding of the Silver Trumpet that proclaimed the *Jews* Jubilee, all the Prisons were opened, and the Prisoners set at Liberty; in the same Manner, at the Sound of the last Trumpet, all the Prisons of Death shall be broke open, and the Bodies that were imprison'd, shall go out; to speak in the Language of the Holy Ghost, *The Sea shall give up the Dead, and Death and Hell shall restore the Dead that are in them.* And as *Lazarus* rose up as soon as *Jesus Christ* had called to him in his Tomb, *Lazarus, come out*; likewise when the Voice of this great God and Saviour shall sound in our Tombs, at that Moment we shall rise again and appear before him. For the Hour cometh, that such as are in the Graves shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that shall hear shall live.

7. The next Question is, In what Stature of Body shall we rise? Some are persuaded that we shall rise in the same Stature that we die. This they gather from

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from St. *John's* Description of the last Judgment, *I saw the living and the dead, the great and small standing before God.* Others think that all the Elect shall rise again in perfect Stature and shall be all alike to our Saviour Christ, when they endeavour to prove by St. *Paul's* Words, *We shall meet in a perfect Man, to the Measure of the perfect Stature of Christ.*

When it concerns Things that relate to our Salvation, 'tis a respective Ignorance to refuse to pry into those things which God hath conceal'd, or not thought proper to reveal. Therefore, as the holy Writ is silent concerning this, we cannot speak of it with too much Sobriety. I dare not affirm, that we shall rise again in the same Stature; I confess, that this Opinion, That all the Saints shall have a Stature like to our Saviour Christ, and that they shall bear his Image and Likeness, in that Respect in their Bodies, contains nothing contrary to Piety. But I dare say, that this cannot be proved by the Words of St. *Paul*; for the Sequel of his Discourse shews most evidently, that he intends not the Stature of the Body, but that of the Soul, which consists in Knowledge and Holiness.

That Opinion which appears to be most likely, and most conformable to the Analogy of Faith, is, that the Elect shall rise again in perfect Stature. For the Beauty and Perfection of the Stature, contributes much to the Glory and Majesty of the Body, without which Man cannot be said to be most perfectly happy. Besides, this Perfection is agreeable to that Command and Dominion, which God shall give to the Saints, over the Creatures, after the Resurrection. If those who die in their Childhood rise again in the same Stature; if those who depart in their old and decrepid Age, come out of their Graves with their feeble and infirm Bodies, how could either of 'em be fit for that Glory and Perfection where nothing shall be amiss or wanting? As the *promised Land* was the Type of the celestial *Canaan*, 'tis not without good Cause that the Scripture takes Notice, that there was none of those
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that went over *Jordan* into the holy Land that was old and decrepid, unless it were *Joshua* and *Caleb*; none of the rest were threescore Years old. I may also apply to the *Jerusalem* above, that which the Prophet saith of the *Jerusalem* here below, the Type and Figure of the Celestial: *From henceforth there shall not be any Child of a few Days old, nor any Ancient Person who fulfilleth not his Days.*

Finally, as God created *Adam* and *Eve* in a perfect Stature, to settle them in the terrestrial Paradise, 'tis my Opinion, that he will also raise up all the Faithful in a perfect Stature, to introduce them into the celestial Paradise. In this Life the Body of a Child is many Years before it can attain to the Stature of a perfect Man; but at the great Day of the Resurrection, God will grant it to him in a Moment.

That which is spoken of in *Rev. xx.* is not contrary to this Doctrine; for when the Holy Ghost saith, That *the Dead, small and great shall stand before God*; that relates not to the Stature or Bigness of Body, but to the State and Condition of the Persons, that is to say, the Kings and Princes shall appear to Judgment as well as the vilest and most contemptible Subjects, and the most wretched Slaves; therefore these former Words are design'd to express nothing more than what *St. Paul* saith, *That we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that we might receive in our Bodies according as we have done, whether it be Good or Evil.*

Some are ready to ask, What manner of Bodies shall the Reprobates have after the Resurrection? I have no mind to speak any thing of myself, otherwise I should answer, that in consideration of the Fury of Hell-fire, the Smoak of the bottomless Pit, and the Violence of the excessive Torments which they shall suffer, they shall appear most deformed, ugly, ill-favoured, and dreadful to look upon. I should say, that there shall appear in their guilty Looks and frightened Countenances, the Devil's Image, and that of the hellish Furies.

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But it will be sufficient to reply, that the Bodies of the Wicked shall be immortal, and that their Immortality shall be most miserable. That it had been far better for them to have never been, or to have been as the Beasts, that die without any Hope of Living again, for they shall live to die eternally, and they shall die, but never consume away. It shall not be possible to add any Thing to their most violent Tortures, for they shall be inexpressible; nor to the Continuance of their Sufferings, for they shall be eternal. Therefore, as we have already taken Notice, they shall seek Death, that is, they shall desire to be reduced to Nothing, but Death shall fly away from them, and give them over to a Worm that shall never die, and to a Fire that shall never be quenched. O miserable Bodies! O wretched Souls! Whom God shall cast into the Midst of Hell's fiercest Flames, and against whom the Devils shall let fly all their Arrows, discharge all their Fury, and kindle all their Fires, and whom they will take Pleasure to torment for ever and ever.

9. Some inquire what Manner of Bodies the Children of God, and the Members of Christ shall have after they are risen from the Dead? I answer, that their Substance shall be the same which they had before Death; they shall not be imaginary or false Appearances, but true humane Bodies made up of Flesh and Bones; for we may say of all the Bodies of the Faithful, as that of our Saviour Christ, that the Resurrection will procure to them a considerable Glory which they never had before, but it shall not destroy their Nature and Manhood. They shall be able to speak in the Language of our Redeemer, *Feel and see, a Spirit hath neither Flesh nor Bones, as ye see that I have.* As our Soul shall lose nothing of its Being, only it shall be perfectly cleansed from all Sin and Corruption, and sanctified in such a manner, that it will not be possible for it to entertain any vicious Inclination: Likewise there shall be no Alteration in the essential Parts of our Bodies, but there shall be a wonderful Change

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in regard of the Qualities, for they shall cast off all Corruption and Mortality, and shall never be subject to Sickness, Pain, nor to the Inconveniencies, that disturb it during this Life. And if they have now any Imperfection they shall be perfectly freed; so that we may justly say of the celestial *Jerusalem*, that in it no Blind nor Lame shall be suffered to enter, for all the Bodies of the Saints shall be perfect and beautiful, that the least Spot or Blemish, shall not be seen in them, 1 *Sam. vi.*

I know that Jesus Christ tells us in his Gospel, *Mat. v. If thy right Eye offend thee pull it out, and cast it from thee, for 'tis better that one of thy Members perish, than that thy whole Body should be cast into Hell; and if thy Hand or thy Foot offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee, for 'tis better that thou shouldst enter into Life lame or maimed, than to have two Feet and two Hands, and to be cast into Hell-fire*, Mark iv. But these Words are figurative; by them our Saviour would teach us, that for his Sake and Glory we must deny our dearest Affections and our most importunate Lusts. And if these Words should be taken in their literal Sense, we must understand a Supposition, if it were possible to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven with one Eye, lame, or maimed; it would be far better to be admitted to that blessed State, than to have a perfect and a whole Body; and to be cast into the Torments of Hell. From thence we cannot infer, that the Faithful are to rise from their Graves with imperfect and deficient Bodies, for that is repugnant to an accomplished Happiness: Since Sin shall be utterly abolished and destroyed, the Punishment of Sin shall continue no longer.

There are nevertheless some who believe, with several ancient Doctors of the primitive Church, that the holy Martyrs shall bear about them the Scars and other Marks of their Sufferings, for the Name of Jesus, in the same manner as his glorious Saviour, after his Resurrection could shew the Print of the Nails that

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had fastened his Feet and Hands to the Cross, and in his Side the Hole that the Spear had made. They esteemed such Marks glorious and honourable Scars; so that according to their Judgment, the Martyrs shall be like to the generous and noble-hearted Soldiers, who have received Wounds in the Service of their Prince, which they bear about as undoubted Expressions of their Courage. I shall not altogether contradict this Opinion, for 'tis not contrary to the Analogy of Faith: But I dare not affirm it as a certain Truth; for we cannot learn from the holy Scriptures, that represent these blessed Martyrs, cloathed with long Robes, washed and whitened in the Blood of the Lamb, without making any Mention of their former Sufferings. Our Saviour was pleased to preserve the Marks of his Sufferings, that he might convince *St. Thomas* of his Unbelief, and that he may one Day discover and shew them to those that have pierced him through: But from this Instance, I cannot see how we can conclude any Thing to the Purpose. We may safely say, either that the Martyrs shall have no such Scars, or if they have, they shall bring no Deformity to their Bodies; nor shall they deprive us of any Member, or Part required in us, to make us perfect. If it should be otherwise, we could not be entirely and perfectly happy. After the Resurrection, the Bodies of God's Children shall have none of these Imperfections that Sin hath brought into the World. They shall not feel any of the Infirmities, unto which the Bodies of *Adam* and *Eve* were subject in the State of Innocence, for their Life was sensual and animal-like, disturbed with Hunger, Thirst and Weariness; there they had need of Nourishment and Drink, and especially of the Fruits of the Tree of Life, to supply so much of their natural Heat. I conceive also, that they stood in Want of Rest and Sleep; and altho' God would have protected them from all dangerous Accidents, if they had continued in their Integrity, if we consider them in themselves, without any such

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Protection, they might have been injured by Fire and Sword. and burnt with the Heat of the scorching Sun. But it shall be otherwise with the Bodies of the Righteous, after the Resurrection, they shall not be subject to any Infirmary, they shall be free from Pain, Weariness, and from the Sense of Violence, as the Holy Spirit promiseth; they shall hunger and thirst no more, the Sun shall not burn them, nor any Heat incommode them. 'Tis not to be doubted, but that a glorified Body shall enjoy all the Perfections that a human Body is capable of, and that the greatest and rarest Beauties on Earth, are but deformed Objects, in Comparison of the Celestial, which shall never change nor fade away, no Accident shall ever be able to destroy or diminish them. Years, Ages and Thousands of Ages, shall not imprint upon our glorious Faces the least Wrinkle; we shall be always young and lusty, as a precious Stone that preserves its Lustre and Beauty without Alteration, and as the Sun that never decreaseth in Light and Heat. Those glorified Bodies shall cast off all gross and heavy Qualities that encline them to the Earth, so that they shall be more nimble than the Eagles, and shall be able to fly up as quick as the Fire. *St. Paul* intends to teach us this Truth, when he tells us, that this Body is sown an earthly and sensual Body; but it shall rise again an heavenly and a spiritual Body. We are not so to understand these Words, as to think that God will change them into Spirits, or into such uncompounded Bodies, as are the Heavens, for they shall yet be made up of Flesh and Bones, and they shall have all the essential Parts of an human Body, as we have already taken Notice: But I conceive, that they are named spiritual and heavenly, because they shall have no more the gross and earthly Qualities, and they shall live no more a sensitive and an animal Life. In a Word, they shall need no more Meat nor Drink, than the Stars and celestial Bodies, no more than the holy Angels of God.

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I confess that our Lord Jesus Christ ascended up into Heaven in a Cloud, not because a Cloud was necessary to support and keep up his glorious Body : For if in the State of his Infirmary and Humiliation, this divine Body was able to walk upon the Waves of the Sea, without sinking, by the Assistance of his divine Nature ; how much more since his Glorification, shall it be able to ascend up on high, and to go whither he listeth ? If the Help of any Creature had been necessary to support him, he might have had Legions of immortal Angels to carry him up ; but Christ needed not to be assisted, neither by a Body, nor a Spirit, nor by any other Creature. This Cloud therefore that appeared at his Ascension, was no Token of the Infirmary of his human Nature ; it rather manifested the Glory and Magnificence of his divine Majesty, unto which this precious Body was united personally. God hath often revealed himself, attended by a Cloud, as upon Mount *Sinai*, in the Ark of the Covenant, at the Dedication of *Solomon's* Temple. Therefore that Cloud in which God was pleased to discover himself is styled, *The Glory of God*, that is, the Sign and visible Expression of his glorious Presence, and divine Majesty. Let us therefore conclude from hence, that the Cloud which attended upon the glorified Body of Jesus Christ, was no Assistance to carry him up to Heaven, but as it were a Chariot of Triumph, to cause him to ascend with more Glory and Pomp. The Bodies of the Saints after the Resurrection, shall shine and be full of Glory ; they shall not only have some superficial Splendor upon their Countenance or Skin, as *Moses* when he had been with God Forty Days and Forty Nights in the holy Mountain, but they shall shine within and without as a true Diamond, that casts abroad on all sides its Light and Flames : So that it shall happen to them, as it happen'd to our Saviour upon Mount *Tabor* ; for 'tis said that his Garments became White as the Light. In the same manner, at the Time of our Transfiguration, our Bodies that

that are but the Garments of our immotal Souls, shall be as clear as the Light, and as bright as the celestial Globes. I speak here nothing, but what the Prophet Daniel said before me, *Dan. xii. They that be wise, shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.* And our Saviour assures us, *Matth. xxiii. That the Children of God shall shine in the Kingdom of their Father, as the Sun.*

These glorified Bodies shall never corrupt nor putrify, but they shall be for ever uncorruptible. Therefore St. Paul assures us, *That this Corruptible must put on Incorruption.* So that I may safely affirm, that their Glory shall be more durable than that of the Sun, or of the Moon, or of the Stars. For tho' these celestial Bodies never corrupt, out of any inward Principle; tho' there can no Alteration happen to them, neither from their essential Form, nor from the Properties that issue from it, nor from any other inherent Quality, they shall nevertheless corrupt, out of an external Principle; for the Almighty Hand of God which made them, shall change and alter them, as the Royal Prophet tells us, in *Psal. cii. The Heavens shall perish, but thou shalt endure, yea, all of them shall wax old like a Garment; as a Vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed,* 1 Pet v. Unto this St. Peter very well agrees, *The Heavens,* saith he, *shall pass away with a great Noise.* Whereas the glorified Bodies shall never corrupt, neither by any internal Principle, nor by their essential Form, nor by the Properties and Accidents that flow from it, nor by any external Cause, or by any Accident whatsoever, that can be imagined, for the Almighty Hand of God shall make them, never to mar them again. From hence it follows, that they shall die no more, but shall continue immortal, for with Incorruption they must put on Immortality. Therefore when our Saviour speaks of the State of the glorified Saints, *Luke xx.* he saith not only, that *they shall not die, but they cannot die*

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any more, because they shall be like the Angels, being the Children of the Resurrection. In this consists the Difference between them, and those whom God hath raised up, already mentioned in the *Old and New Testament*. For they were forced to return to their sensual Life, to eat and drink, and therefore they were again subject to Corruption and Death. But at the Day of the general Resurrection, *whatsoever is mortal, shall be swallowed up by Life*; therefore St. Paul applies to this glorious Day, the Accomplishment of this Prophecy, *Death is swallowed up in Victory.* and he brings in these Persons, who shall be cloathed with this immortal Glory, braving Death and the Grave, in this triumphing Language, *O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory!*

In short, to make us sensible, that our Bodies shall put on the richest and most noble Qualities that can be imagined; and to express all in a Word, The Holy Ghost assures us, that they shall bear the Image of the Son of God, and be made conformable to his glorious Body. St. Paul declares this Truth, *1 Cor. xv. The First Man, saith he, was of the Earth earthy, the Second Man was the Lord from Heaven; as is the earthy, such are they that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly; and as we have born the Image of the Earthy, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly.* And in *Phil. iii.* he saith, *We wait for the Lord Jesus from Heaven, who shall change our vile Body, that it may be like to his glorious Body.* From hence you may understand, Christians, that at the Rebuilding of this little Temple of the Godhead, there shall happen no such Thing, as at the rearing up of the Temple at *Jerusalem*; for when that was rebuilding, at the return from the *Babylonish* Captivity, they who had seen the former Temple and its wonderful Glory, wept aloud, and their Weeping interrupted the others Expressions of Joy and Gladness. At the Restauration of the Temple of our Bodies, nothing will be heard but Songs of Triumph and

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and Jubilee. Such as have seen, with the Eyes of Faith, Man's Body as it was in the State of its Integrity, in the earthly Paradise, shall not be then sorry that it hath been defaced by Sin, and destroyed by Death. They shall not be sorry for any thing that is passed; they shall not be able to wish for any Increase of Happiness and Glory for the future; for at the very Instant of its rising from the Grave, it shall be raised to its highest Splendor, Happiness, and Magnificence; so that it shall be truly said, *That the Glory of this second House shall be greater than that of the first*, Hag. ii.

Now that we have treated sufficiently of such as shall rise from their Graves, it remains that we take a View of them whose Bodies shall never be laid in the Dust, and who shall be alive at Christ's Coming down from Heaven; for that purpose St. Paul informs us, 1 Cor. xv. *Behold, I shew you a Mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, at the Sound of the last Trumpet; And he speaks in this manner to the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. iv. For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the Coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them that are asleep, for the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and we shall ever be with the Lord: wherefore comfort one another with these Words.* I know very well that St. Paul tells the Hebrews, *That it is appointed unto all Men once to die.* Therefore I conceive that this great Change that shall be made in the Bodies of them that shall be then alive, shall be a kind of Death; for Christ will destroy and abolish altogether in them, all Corruption and Inclination to Mortality. And when he shall change the Bodies of the Reprobates, he will make them like to the other Reprobates, whom he shall fetch out of their Graves. He will make them immortal, that they

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may be eternally tormented in Hell. But he will cause the Bodies of Believers then alive, to be like the other Believers, that they may all partake and enjoy the same Glory and eternal Bliss.

Christians, in what Condition soever you be, seriously apply to yourselves these divine Consolations. You that are grieved to see your Bodies maimed and deprived of one of your Members, of your Eyes, Hearing, or of some other of your Senses, whether you be so born, or whether such a Privation hath happen'd to you by a Disease, by a Mischance, or by any other Accident, rejoice and comfort yourselves with this Assurance, that you shall see one Day this wretched Body restored to a perfect State, to a Perfection that shall never be lost. You who fret and vex yourselves, to behold how old Age and Sickness have disfigured your Bodies, what Breaches and Ruins they have caused in you, comfort yourselves in Expectation of this glorious Resurrection, which shall supply this decay'd and languishing Body with new Strength and Vigour, and adorn it with a perfect Beauty, and an eternal Glory.

And you whom Death undermines, and intends shortly to lay in the Dust, grieve not at it; for what you lose at present, you shall find again at the great Day of the Resurrection. When *Joseph* died, he commanded his Brethren, concerning his Bones, that they should carry 'em out of *Egypt* into the Land of *Canaan*. Now our Bones are the Bones of Jesus Christ, our true *Joseph*. Therefore he will command his Angels to gather them up safe, he himself will have a Care to preserve them; at the great Morn of the Resurrection, he shall fetch them out of their Graves, as out of an *Egypt*, out of an House of Bondage, and will carry them to his celestial *Canaan*. When the Tabernacle was taken in Pieces, the High Priest delivered every Piece in Charge to the *Levites*, so that when they were to set it up again, there was nothing wanting. Likewise our Saviour hath given in Charge,
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and delivered by Retail, to our Tombs, every Member and Part of our Bodies, these Tabernacles, which he hath sanctified for himself. Therefore they shall all be found again at the Resurrection, without the least Diminution. These Tabernacles shall not only be found entire, but they shall be beautified with a far greater Glory and Splendour than before.

There is none but would be glad to lay himself down to sleep in his Bed, and pull off his Garments willingly, if he were certain to be more healthy, and to find his Garments fresher and more beautiful in the Morning. If he were perswaded, that instead of old Rags, he were to put on a royal Attire, and most magnificent Garments, who would not willingly go out of a pitiful Cabin, and forsake a miserable Lodge, which shall be one Day changed into a golden Palace, adorn'd with precious Stones? Comfort thy self, believing Soul, and rejoice in God thy Redeemer, cast off willingly this Garment that is so incommodious and troublesome to thee. Forsake this wretched Body, undermin'd by Sicknefs and Diseases, and consum'd by Time. Sleep quietly in the Lord Jesus, and repose thy self, in his Bosom, for when thou shalt wake again at the Sound of the Archangel's Trumpet, thou shalt find this Garment whiter than Snow, and as bright as the Light. Grieve not to see this miserable Dwelling fall to Pieces and rot, for God shall build it up again with his own Hands, and convert it into his Temple, and a Pavilion of his Glory. Thou may'st be said, shortly to return again, and to find this woful Lodge of Earth, become an heavenly Palace, purer than fine Gold, and brighter than Diamonds, Rubies, and all precious Stones. Weep not for thy beautiful Eyes that are shut, nor for the Rest of thy Senses, that are lost, or for the Members of thy Body, that consume away one after another. For with these same Eyes that have lost, or shall shortly lose, the Sight of the Day, thou shalt behold a divine Light that shall shine eternally,
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in Heaven; thou shalt behold the Face of the King of Kings, and all the Glory and Magnificence of his Kingdom. With these Ears, that are almost deaf, and that shall be shortly stopp'd, thou shalt hear with Transports of Joy, the ravishing Harmonies of the Saints, and the Songs of the blessed Angels. With this stammering Tongue, which is to lose the Faculty of Speech, thou shalt sing with a loud Voice the Praises of Almighty God, in the glorious Company of the Church Triumphant. With these unsteady Hands that can scarce hold any thing, thou shalt one Day receive immortal Palms, and golden Viols, which thou shalt never quit. With these Feet that are dying, and that can scarce support thee, thou shalt follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and thou shalt walk about the Streets of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*. And this same Body that is going to rot, and to be turned to Dust, shall one Day shine as the Firmament, and as the Sun in its greatest Splendour.

What desirest thou more, Christian Soul, for thy Comfort? What Addition can there be made to thine Happiness? Since thou art going to the Fruition of eternal Joys and of endless Pleasures in Heaven. In the mean while, the Body shall endure no Pain nor Grief; and God will shortly raise it up again from this deep Sleep, that begins to dull thy Senses and close thine Eye-lids. Shortly God will publish the Year of the great Jubilee, all the Prisons of Death shall be then open'd, and the Prisoners shall be set at Liberty. Thou shalt shortly hear the Sound of the last Trumpet, that shall rouse thee out of the Dust, and cause thee to appear in the Presence of thy great Redeemer. Thou leavest a wretched Body, full of Darkness and Corruption, assaulted by Death on all Sides, but shall shortly be made incorruptible, immortal and adorned with Light and Glory.

Let therefore thy Heart rejoyce, thy Tongue be glad, and thy Flesh rest in Hope, for the Lord will not leave thee always in the Grave, he will not suffer thee

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thee to continue for ever in Dust and Corruption ; he will not only discover to thee the Ways of Life, but he will shortly come down himself from Heaven to transport thee thither.

When Death shall be upon thy Lips, when it shall be ready to lay thee in thy Grave, let not this disturb the Quiet of thy Soul, nor the Peace of thy Conscience, let it not shake thy precious Faith that keeps thee up, nor drive thee from the Anchor of thy blessed Hope fixed in Heaven, where Jesus Christ is enter'd as thy Fore-runner. In short, when thy Body shall be all covered with Sores and Boils, as that of Job, (*Job xxix.*) when it shall all fall to Pieces before thine Eyes, let nothing hinder thee from crying out with this patient Man, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth ; and tho' after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another.* And with St. Paul, *Phil. iii. We look from Heaven for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, according to the mighty Working, whereby he is able even to subdue all Things unto himself.*

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**A Prayer and Meditation of a Christian, who being ready to depart out of the World, comforts himself with an Assurance and Expectation of the glorious Resurrection of his Body from the Dust.**

**O** *Eternal and Divine Word! by whom all Things were created, and without whom was not any Thing made that was made ; Thou hast not only formed our Souls, and fashioned our Bodies with thy skilful Hands, but when they were miserably lost and corrupted with Sin, thou hast been pleased to redeem both our Souls and Bodies with thy most precious*

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precious blood, and to renew thy glorious Image in us. This wretched Body is but an earthen Vessel; yet thou hast inclosed in it, the richest Treasures of Life and Light. Thou hast appointed it to be the Temple of the Holy Ghost, and a noble Pavilion of the Godhead, to participate with the Soul in the eternal Happiness of thy Kingdom. I feel my Strength failing me, and this earthly Tabernacle decaying every Day, and every Hour, so that I am certain that it shall be reduced to Dust. But Lord I am sufficiently comforted with this Knowledge, that if the outward Man decays, the inward is renewed Day by Day; If this wretched Body falls down by Death, thou wilt raise it up again at the general Resurrection, My Lord, and my God, that art sufficiently able; for all Power is given to thee in Heaven and in Earth, and the Depths of the Sea. As the Father raiseth and quickeneth the Dead, thou doest also quicken them whom thou hast chosen. Thou hast fashion'd my Body of Dust, and created this Dust of nothing, and shalt not thou be able of the same Dust, into which this my Body shall be turned by Death, to make and fashion it again? Thou hast by thine Almighty Power, created my Soul, and infused it into this Body; and canst thou not command it back again when it shall please thee, to live for ever in a more blessed Society than before? O Prince of Life, Death hath sufficiently felt in thy Person thy infinite Power. Its Purpose was to devour thee, but thou hast overcome it in a glorious Manner. Thou hast yielded to die, but art return'd to live for ever and ever, and hast in thy Custody the Keys of Hell and of Death, to open and shut, to kill and make alive at thy Pleasure. Lord Jesus! The Resurrection and the Life, I know that thou art both willing and able to deliver this Body out of the Power of Death, and awake my sleeping Dust with the Sound of the Archangel's Trumpet, as thou hast promised. I expect to see that glorious Day of thy Triumph, when accompanied by all the mighty Angels of Heaven, thou wilt set at Liberty all the Prisoners of Death, and restore to us again all the Blessings, forfeited by Sin. The Sea and the Earth shall surrender unto thee the Bodies they have in their Custody, and obey thy Commands. Omnipotent Word; that made

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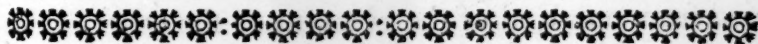
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*the Heavens and the Earth! Thou shalt be heard, and operate effectually in our Graves, that we may march out, and stand before the dreadful Tribunal. We shall then appear, not wrapt in our Winding-sheets, as Lazarus, nor with any Relicks of Infirmary, but with Bodies more beautiful, perfect, and glorious than formerly. So that we may have good Cause to admire the Glory of that second Building, which by thine Almighty Power thou wilt rear out of the Dust, and which will be far greater than the present. For this infirm Body, shall be made conformable to thy celestial Body. This Corruptible shall put on Incorruption, and this Mortality shall be swallowed by Immortality, and an eternal Life. I am therefore fully persuaded, my glorious Redeemer! that with these languishing Eyes I shall behold thy magnificent Coming in a Cloud, surrounded with Flames of Fire, and sitting on a Throne. With these Ears I shall hear the terrible and loud Voice of the Archangel's Trumpet, and the Songs of the blessed Companies of Heaven. With this Tongue I hope to tune forth thy divine Praises; with these dying Hands to embrace thee my blessed Saviour; and with these trembling Feet already in the Grave, I shall follow thee into thy heavenly Jerusalem; and this same Body, condemn'd to rot in a Tomb, shall one Day shine in thy heavenly Kingdom. I am ready, Lord, to depart hence, my Breath fails me, Death appears before me, threatening to strike the last Stroke; but notwithstanding all Difficulties and Objections, I know I shall rise again to behold thy Magnificence and Glory. Amen.*



### C H A P. XXIII.

*The Twelfth Consolation; The Destruction of Death, and the eternal and most blessed Life which we shall enjoy both in Soul and Body after our Resurrection.*

**W**E have sufficiently treated of that Happiness which is prepared for our Souls at their departure from the Bodies, and of the glorious Resurrection

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rection promised to these Bodies, when Jesus Christ shall come down from Heaven in his Glory to judge the Quick and the Dead. It seems that we have nothing more to say, but as *Moses* when he had made the Ark of *Shittim* Wood, and lined it with fine Gold, he put round about a Crown of Gold upon the Top. In the same Manner now that we have declared to you the Incorruption and future Glory of our Bodies, which are to be looked upon as a sacred Ark, where God's Majesty shall dwell for ever: Now that we have shewn how, by the Almighty and Gracious Power of God, they shall become more incorruptible than the *Shittim* Wood, and more glorious than fine Gold: I will now with God's Assistance draw about them a Crown more precious than the purest Gold, and richer than all the Jewels in the World. I mean, to crown this Work, and intend to end it with as perfect a Picture as I am able to draw, of the eternal Glory and Happiness which we expect to enjoy both in Soul and Body, after our Resurrection. But first, I shall say something of the entire and perfect Destruction of all our Enemies, and represent to you the Overthrow and the final Conquest over Death.

When Jesus Christ shall appear again to judge the World in Righteousness, he shall sit upon a glorious and most splendid Throne. *Solomon's* magnificent Throne was but its Shadow and imperfect Type: He shall then send forth his Angels who shall gather together the Elect, with the Sound of a Trumpet from the four Parts of the World, and from one End of the Heavens to the other. The Sight of this glorious Saviour, shall then fill us with an unspeakable Joy, and cause us to burst forth into this language, *If. xxv. Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his Salvation.* But when all the Kindreds of the Earth shall behold this magnificent King, in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory, they shall lament and strike their Breasts in Despair, they shall call to the Mountains and Rocks, *Rev. vi.*

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*Fall upon us and hide us from the Face of him that sitteth upon the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb; for the great Day of his Wrath is come, who shall be able to stand?*

Then the Lord shall bring to light the hidden Things of Darkness and shall manifest the Thoughts of the Heart, with the most secret Contrivances. The Books shall be opened, not only of the guilty Consciences, where Satan's Image and Deeds shall be engraven, but also the other Books where God himself hath written, with his own Finger, all our Actions, Words, and our most hidden Thoughts. All Men shall be judged according to the Things written in the Books; St. John declares this in the xxth of the Revelations: *I saw a great white Throne, and him that sate on it, from whose Face the Earth and the Heaven fled away, and there was no Place for them; and I saw the Dead small and great stand before God, and the Books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of Life, and the Dead were judged out of those Things which were written in the Books, according to their Works.* Unto this St. Paul agrees, *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that every one may receive in his Body according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil.*

There are three Sorts of Persons who are to stand before this glorious Tribunal: Such as never had any other Tutor but Nature, who were not acquainted with any other Works of God, but of Creation and Providence. For God hath not left himself without Witness in doing good. The second Sort have been assisted with a divine Revelation from above, under the Law, which hath distinctly taught them what Works are pleasing to God. These may have heard something of a *Messias* from the ancient Prophets, they may have seen his Portraiture in the Types and Shadows of *Moses's* Ordinances. The other Sort have had the Grace of God clearly and plainly revealed to them, to whom our Lord Jesus Christ hath brought Life and Immortality to Light through the Gospel. There are none of these Persons, if they have lived in Impiety and Debauchery,  
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and are dead in impenitency, that shall be able to excuse themselves in this dreadful Day of Judgment. But some are more guilty than others, therefore they shall be condemned to greater Punishments.

The Knowledge that God hath bestow'd upon Man, hath been obscur'd by the Prince of Darknes, but it hath not been totally extinct; and that Law which God hath engraven in the Soul of Man, hath not been altogether blotted out, but there remains yet some Relicks. So that no Man living can affirm, that he hath done all the good Deeds which his Conscience was perswaded that he ought to perform, and that he hath omitted all the evil Acts of which his Conscience convinc'd him. They who have liv'd and are dead without any Law of God revealed to them, shall be judged without the Law. Such shall be condemn'd for having taken Pleasure in extinguishing the remains of their natural Light, and in smothering the good and rational Dictates of their Consciences. They shall be condemned because they have abused Heaven's Favours, and filled themselves with God's good Creatures without returning to him due Thanks; and because they have not meditated as they ought, upon so many stately and noble Works of Nature, nor learned by that Means to know God, who has left in these Works, so many Impressions of his eternal Power and Godhead, and because that knowing God, they have not glorified him as God: This St. Paul teacheth in these Words, *As many as have sinned without Law, shall also perish without Law; and as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law. For when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the things contained in the Law, these having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves, which shew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel, Rom. ii.*

They that profess to know the Law, shall be judged by the Law; such as have already heard the Thunders  
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of Mount *Sinai*, they shall one Day feel the Thunderbolts. They shall understand by Experience, what it is to rebell against God, and to draw upon themselves and their guilty Heads, the dreadful Curses of God's Law, *Deut. xvii. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them, Gal. ii.* There is no Doubt but that the *Jews*, upon whom *Moses* and the Prophets have spent so many fruitless Exhortations to live well, shall be punished with sharper Torments than the poor Savages to whom God never sent any Message, who never had any Acquaintance with the Common-wealth of *Israel*, being Strangers from the Covenant, having no Hope, and being without God in the World, *Eph. ii.* For that Servant who knoweth his Master's Will and doth it not, shall be beaten with more Stripes than him that knoweth it not, *Luke xii.*

But no People upon Earth have Cause to expect and dread a more severe Sentence than wicked Christians, who make Profession of knowing God, and believing in Jesus Christ, who nevertheless deny him by their Works, and trample under Foot the riches of his Grace. How can it be otherwise? For such as have heard the Gospel preached, who have seen Jesus Christ as it were crucified before their Eyes, and yet have made no Advantage of all this, ought to be punished in another Manner than the bare Auditors of *Moses*, that never saw the *Messias* but afar off, and in the Shadows of the ceremonial Law. Take Notice of these divine Expressions of St. *Paul* to the *Hebrews*, *he that despised Moses's Law, died without Mercy, under two or three Witnesses; of how much sorer Punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompence, saith the Lord; and again, the Lord shall judge his People. It is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.* Therefore when St. *Paul*

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speaks of such as obey not the Gospel. he saith, *That they shall be punished with eternal Punishments from the Presence of God, and from the Glory of his Power.* And our Saviour teacheth us, that such as reject so great Salvation, shall be punished more grievously than the most abominable Sinners unto whom it was never revealed. Therefore when he sends forth his Apostles to preach, he tells them; *Whosoever shall not receive you, and hear your Words, when you depart out of that House or City, shake off the Dust of your Feet; verily, I say unto you it shall be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the Day of Judgment, than for that City.* Likewise when he reproaches the Incredulity and Impenitency of the Cities that were not converted by the Preaching of his Gospel, and the Glory of his Miracles, he tells them *Matth. xi. Wo unto thee Chorazin,, wo unto thee Bethsaida, for if the mighty Works which have been done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in Sackcloth and Ashes. But I say unto you it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, at the Day of Judgment, than for you. And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven shalt be brought down to Hell. For if the mighty Works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remain'd unto this Day: But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom in the Day of Judgment than for thee.*

The Great Judge of the World, shall place at his Left Hand all wicked Souls, which have lived without any Fear of God, and without expressing Charity to the Members of his mystical Body, and shall pronounce to them this dreadful Sentence; *Depart from me ye cursed, to eternal Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels; for I was an hungry, and ye gave me no Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink; I was a Stranger. and ye took me not in; naked, and ye cloathed me not; sick, and in Prison, and ye visited me not; verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.* But the Faithful, who have witnessed their Faith by a good and holy Life; and  
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by Works of Charity and Mercy, he will place at his Right-hand, and in the Presence of God and all his holy Angels, he shall say unto them; *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Beginning of the World; for I was hungry, and ye gave me Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto me; verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

There be some that make this Question, What Sign shall precede immediately, or accompany the Coming of Christ in the World? Our Saviour hath given Occasion to this Demand; for when he speaks of the Things that are to happen about the Time of his glorious Appearance, he saith, *That the Sun shall be darkned, the Moon shall not give Light, the Stars shall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of the Heavens shall be shaken, and then shall appear in Heaven the Sign of the Son of Man.*

Some imagine, that this Sign of the Son of Man, is the Sign of the Cross, which will be visible in the Air. This Opinion in it self is harmless, but in Regard that it hath no Foundation in holy Scripture, I am not to insist upon it. Others believe, that it shall be the Fire with which Jesus Christ shall burn the Earth, dissolve the Elements and punish Unbelievers. This Conceit is grounded upon St. Paul's Words to the *Thessalonians*, 2 Thes. i. *It is a righteous Thing with God to recompense Tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled, Rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Others conceive, that the Sign of this Son of Man, is nothing else but the Body of Jesus Christ, bearing and discovering the Print of the Nails in his Hands and Feet, and the Wound of the Spear in his Side. This they gather from these



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Words, in *Rev. i.* *Behold, he cometh with Clouds, and every Eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.* There be others yet, that take it in another Sense, and believe that there shall be no particular Sign, but that we must understand by this Sign of the Son of Man, all those Things which shall declare the End of the World, and the Coming of Jesus Christ to judge the Quick and the Dead. If we take the Words in this Sense, there will be an excellent Allusion to that which is commonly practised, when Kings and Princes make their publick Entry into great Cities; for their Coming in is proclaimed by the Sound of a Trumpet, and by the Attendants of Majesty, a Train and Pomp that usually accompanies it. In the same Manner, the glorious Coming of Jesus Christ, shall be known by the Sound of the Arch-Angel's Trumpet, and by all the Signs and wonderful Alterations which shall suddenly happen in the Heavens. This last Opinion is very likely, and the former is not contrary to the Analogy of Faith.

Therefore in Matters indifferent, not plainly decided by the Word of God, we leave to every pious Soul a Liberty to chuse that which it likes best.

Some enquire farther, If the Souls of the Damned go down into Hell immediately after their egress out of the Body, and are tormented in an unquenchable Fire, whereof the Heat never lessens, as the Christian Religion teacheth, and as we may understand by the Parable of the Rich Glutton; doth it not follow, that these Wretches are already judged? How is it then that the Son of God will judge them again at the last Day, and send them to an everlasting Burning prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels? I answer, First, That 'tis no Absurdity to say, that one Sentence shall be pronounced twice, for Men are wont to read the Sentence of Doom to the Prisoner, before he is taken out of Prison; afterwards the same Sentence is published in the Audience of the People, at the Time of Execution. Likewise, when the Souls of the Wicked depart

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depart out of their wretched Bodies, God pronounces to them the Sentence of Death; but when Jesus Christ shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory, he shall publish the same Sentence before all the Men of the World, and all the Angels of Heaven. Besides, that Sentence was never declar'd but to the Soul; but then it shall be declar'd to both Soul and Body, and both together shall be sent to the Everlasting Burning, from whence they never shall be releas'd. From hence, therefore, Christians, you may understand, that there are three Degrees of Punishments or Torments to the Wicked; for in this Life they have a Worm that gnaws their Bowels and Heart, and a kind of Hell, that torments their Consciences. At the going of their Souls out of the World, they are cast headlong into the eternal Flames of Hell, where they suffer unspeakable Torments. At that Time their Bodies are senseless in their Graves, as the Bodies of the Righteous. But at this last and dreadful Day of Judgment, as the Grave shall restore all the dead Bodies; Hell, which is the Place designed for the Torment of the Damned, shall give up all the Souls that are tormented in its Flames, and these cursed Souls shall be sent back to their miserable Bodies, to suffer the pangs of an eternal Death, *Rev. xx.* Thus they shall be cast Body and Soul into the bottomless Pit, where there is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth. At that Time the Beast, the false Prophet, and all the Enemies of God and of his Church, shall be cast alive into the Lake burning with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second Death, *Rev. xx. 10, 11.* And when all these Offenders shall be executed, the Executioners themselves shall be punish'd for their Crimes, when the Damned shall be cast into eternal Tortures, the Devils and infernal Furies shall be sent after them; as 'tis said, *The Devil who seduced the Nations, shall be cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, where the Beast and the false Prophet are, and shall be tormented Day and Night for ever and ever, Rev. xx. 10.* What a dreadful Sight will it be to look upon all those roaring Lions,

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those furious Dragons in their Rage. vomiting forth Fire and Flames! What a joyful Spectacle shall this be to the Children of God, to look upon these infernal Devils, bound fast with those Chains which they shall never be able to break, and shut up in the bottomless Pit, out of which they shall never be released!

Our Lord shall cast into this Lake of Fire and Brimstone, and shut up in this bottomless Pit, not only the Devil and his Angels, the Beast and the false Prophet, and in general all wicked Souls and Unbelievers, but he shall cast therein also Death and the Grave, or rather, he shall abolish them for ever. As *Josbua*, when he conquer'd the Kings of the *Amorites*, put them not to Death until he had overcome all his Enemies; likewise our Lord Jesus Christ, our true *Josbua*, has encountred with Death upon the Cross, and overcome it by his Resurrection; but he will not destroy it altogether until the last Day, when he shall come to judge the World. Then to perfect all his glorious Victories, he shall destroy this last Enemy, this Destroyer of his Brethren, and of his Members; so that *Death shall be no more*. It shall be no more for the Wicked, they shall seek it in vain to be freed from their Torments. It shall fly away from them as a Shadow that departs, and is no more to be found. Death shall be no more for God's Children, for it shall never disturb their Rest and Happiness.

If the old Serpent could enter into Paradise, we should fear his Temptations and enflamed Darts; and if Death continu'd in its Empire, we should dread its Approaches; but then it shall not have the least Power, it shall be totally abolish'd; and all the Living shall become immortal. And altho' God will not destroy the Being, nor take away the Malice of the Devil; yet to us he shall be as if he were not, for he shall never be able to break his Chains, or to escape out of his Prison; and between him and us there shall be Depths that can never be filled. So that as *Moses*, when he cast his Eye upon *Pharaob* and the *Egyptians*, who pursued

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sed the frightened *Israelites*, he told them, *Stand still and see the Salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to Day: For the Egyptians whom you have seen to Day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.* Likewise, when we think upon Satan, and all his infernal Armies that pursue you, we may say with Confidence, settle your Minds, Christian Souls, and with the Eye of Faith behold the Salvation of the Lord; for these hellish Furies that have persecuted you so long, shall be reduc'd to that Condition, that they shall not be able to do you the least Displeasure, or to give you any Apprehension. God is going to drown them in the Red-Sea of his Wrath, and to shut them up for ever in the bottomless Pit of his just Revenge. So that, as in the heavenly Paradise, there shall be neither Pain nor Sorrow, nor Grief, nor Crying, nor Sighs heard; likewise there shall never be any Fear nor Fright, nor the least Alarm, but we shall live there in a settled Peace and Quiet for ever.

'Tis reported of the *Macedonians*, that they wept for Joy when they beheld their King *Alexander the Great*, seated in the Throne of *Darius*, and trampling under Feet the Pride and Empire of *Persia*. But how exceeding great shall our Joy be, when we shall behold Jesus Christ our great Monarch, sitting upon the Throne of God, and trampling under Feet the Pomp of the World, crushing the red Dragon, and all the tyrannical Powers of Hell? The Glory of *Alexander* vanished away with his Breath: Death destroyed all his Trophies; but our Lord shall triumph over Death it self; it shall be the last Act of his eternal Justice, to destroy the great Murderer from the Beginning.

At that Time there shall be no more Enemies to encounter with, no Evils to be feared, neither shall there be any Advantages to be desired, nor Honours to be expected; for God will admit us to the bottomless Ocean of the most divine Pleasures, and raise us up to the highest Glory that our Nature shall be capable of. This Happiness and this Glory shall be infinite in Re-

gard of its Durance. It shall not be like to the Pomp and Magnificence of the Kings and Princes of this World, which vanisheth away in an Instant; nor like to the Brightness of *Moses's* Face, which departed with his Life; nor like the Transfiguration of Christ upon Mount *Tabor*, which soon disappeared. For when it shall have continued as many hundred Ages as there are Stars in the Firmament, it shall then but begin and appear in its Rising, so that there we may have just Cause, and more Reason than *St. Peter*, to say, *Lord, it is good for us to be here*. There is no Place in the World so pleasant and delightful, but at last one shall be weary to continue in it; nor Company so amiable and sweet, but becomes tedious in Time; nor Pleasure so ravishing, but gives a Distaste. The greatest Persons on Earth sigh under the Burden of their Greatness; the Brightness of their Glory dazzles them: When nothing troubles them, they are troubled of their own Accord, and their most magnificent Triumphs disturb and weary them. Oft-times their Heart groans in the Midst of the greatest Acclamations and publick Applause; they think themselves more unhappy than those who envy their apparent Happiness. For all that shines is not Gold; the most beautiful Roses are not without their Prickles, and many times they hide dangerous Serpents.

As the Glory and Happiness of Paradise is infinite, in Regard of its Durance, so in Respect of its Dignity and Excellency. For God will not only satisfy all our Desires, and answer all our Expectations, but he will also give to us above all that we can ask or think.

Shall I undertake to paint out unto you this Glory and perfect Happiness? When *St. Paul* speaks of these evangelical Mysteries, he assures us, that they are Things that the Eye of Man hath never seen, that his Ear hath never heard, and that never enter'd into his Heart, *1 Cor. ii*. If this hath been spoken of the Doctrine that reveals this Glory and eternal Happiness; how



how are we able to comprehend the Glory and Happiness itself? Therefore the same Apostle tells us in another place, *That God worketh in us abundantly, above that we are able to ask or think*, Eph. iii. I cannot boast of having spoken with God Face to Face, as *Moses*, Numb. xi. of having been ravished, as *St. Paul*, into the third Heaven, 1 *Cor.* xii. God hath not carried me up as *St. John*, into the celestial *Jerusalem*; neither hath he deliver'd to me, as to his holy Angels, a Reed to measure the holy City. But when I should have enjoy'd these glorious Privileges, this Divine Entertainment, these supernatural Elevations, when I should have walked about, and taken a full View of the celestial *Jerusalem*, when I should have been in the Company of the Seraphims that fly about God's Throne, when I should have beheld God Face to Face, altho' I were the most eloquent of all Men, and spoke with the Tongues of Angels, and had in my Hand the Pencil of an Archangel, I should not dare to undertake to represent this exceeding great Glory, nor to paint out to you the Brightness of that heavenly Light, whereof the least Beam is able to dazzle me. *St. Paul* had been near the Body of this great Light, he had beheld the Riches and Glory of Paradise, yet he confesseth that they be Things not to be expressed by any Tongue.

But as those who cannot cast their Eyes directly to look upon the Sun, because it blinds them with its exceeding great Light, behold its Body with more Ease and Leisure in the Water, or in a Looking-Glass: Thus shall we consider and look upon the Images which God himself hath expressed for us in his Holy Word, of this Divine Brightness of Heaven, which we are not able otherwise to comprehend. For God hath dealt with us as a Father doth with his young Babes, who babbles with them, and represents to them the Light of the Sun, with a black Coal. Or as the Astrologers, who represent the heavenly Constellations by the Figures of Birds, or four-footed Beasts, and of creeping Things.

For

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For nothing can enter into our Understanding but by the Door of our Senses, therefore spiritual and celestial Things, are represented under the Notion of corporal and earthly Enjoyments, which we passionately love. And because there is not one Thing here below that can express to us the Glory and Happiness of Paradise; so many Perfections are not to be found in any one Enjoyment: Therefore the Holy Ghost gathers together all the Excellencies, Riches, and Beauty, scattered about in the inferiour Creatures, and borrows the Ideas and Notions of those Things that are rarest and most glorious, and that give us the greatest Pleasure and Satisfaction, to represent to us the Glory of Heaven.

To begin in the first place with the Word *Paradise*; it signifies a delightful and a pleasant Garden; 'tis often made use of to express to us the Joys and Happiness of the Life to come, and to make us sensible that what we have lost by *Adam*, is restored to us by Jesus Christ. Our Lord and Saviour, who is Goodness it self, shall bestow upon us another *Eden*, another Garden of Pleasure, watered with living Water. In the Midst of it is the Tree of Life, that brings forth its Fruits every Month. Instead of an earthly Paradise subject to change, we shall find an heavenly and an unchangeable Paradise. The earthly Paradise is no more to be seen; 'tis thought that it was swallow'd up and destroyed by the Waters of the Deluge; but the heavenly Paradise can never be destroyed by the fiercest Fire, nor by the most swelling Waves. 'Tis above all the Winds, Storms, and Tempests; therefore St. *Peter* assures us, *That 'tis an incorruptible Inheritance, that fadeth not away.* It hath no need of an elemental Water, for 'tis watered every where with the River of Living Water, that proceeds from the Throne of God and the Lamb. And whereas Cherubims armed with a Flaming Sword, stood at the Entrance of the earthly Paradise, to hinder *Adam* from approaching near to the Tree of Life, and from gathering of its Fruits;

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now whole Legions of Cherubims are to carry us up upon their Wings to the true Tree of Life, which stands in the Midst of the Heavenly Paradise; and Jesus Christ himself the Prince of all the Angels, of all the Cherubims and Seraphims, promiseth to admit us to partake of its delicious Fruits, by these blessed Words, *To him that shall overcome, I will give him to eat of the Tree of Life which is in the Midst of the Paradise of God.*

'Tis the common Custom of Men to have an high Esteem of beautiful and great Cities, whereof the Buildings are stately, and the Inhabitants numerous: Therefore the Jews were wont to boast of *Jerusalem*, and to call it, *The City perfect in Beauty, the Joy of the whole Earth.* Therefore the Holy Ghost represents to us the Glory and Happiness of Heaven, by a City which he names *Jerusalem.* And St. Paul in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, makes the same Allusion. For when he had said, *That Abraham by Faith sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Promise;* he adds immediately after, *For he looked for a City which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God;* and a little after, *God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a City,* Heb. xi. And in the xiith Chapter of the same Epistle, he speaks to Believers in this manner; *Ye are come to Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels.* And elsewhere, *We have no continuing City here below, but we seek one to come,* Heb. xiii. 14.

God is pleased, not only to describe to us our future Paradise under the general Notion of a City, and of *Jerusalem*, but he discovers to us its heavenly Beauty, its Glory and Magnificence. You cannot find a richer and more excellent Image than that of St. John, who himself had been a Spectator of the *New Jerusalem*, and had beheld all its Rarities and Wonders. For when the Angel who had in his Hand a golden Reed,

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Reed, to measure this glorious City, had said unto him, *Come, I will shew thee the Spouse, the Wife of the Lamb.* He carried him in the Spirit to an high Mountain, from whence he had a Prospect of this great and holy City *Jerusalem*, which came down from Heaven from God, deck'd as a Spouse prepared for her Husband, having the Glory of God and his Light. This faithful Witness assures us, that its Buildings, and the Streets of this blessed City were all of fine Gold, as bright as Chrystal; its Foundations were of precious Stones; its twelve Gates were twelve Pearls; at each of them stood an Angel of God. This Holy City had no Need of the Light of the Sun, or of the Light of the Moon, for the Light of God, enlightens it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof, there is no Temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it.

'Tis our Delight to abide in stately and magnificent Houses, and in rich and glorious Palaces; therefore Paradise is expressed to us by a Dwelling, and by a Palace which God himself hath built with his own Hands. This is the Picture that the Royal Prophet represents to us in *Psal. lxxv.* when he speaks of *God's House, and of the holy Place of his Palace.* And St. Paul doth the like in *1 Corin. v.* when he saith, *We know that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* And our Saviour, when he was ready to leave the World, comforts his Apostles in this Manner; *In my Father's House there are many Mansions, I go to prepare a Place for you.* And St. John heard a mighty Voice from Heaven, saying, *Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with Men, he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his People, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

Every one desires to be rich, there be some that esteem it their chief Happiness; therefore the Holy Ghost represents the Happiness of Heaven under the Notion of Riches and Treasure: Our Saviour him-  
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self speaks of it in this Manner, in the vith of St. Matthew; *Lay not up for yourselves Treasures upon Earth, where Moth and Rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves Treasures in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Rust doth corrupt, and where Thieves do not break through and steal.* Therefore when the Holy Ghost describes Heaven's Glory, and mentions Gold, Pearls, and precious Stones, it hath a Regard to this Notion.

And because Men are for the most Part desirous of Honours, Greatriefs and Dignities, and that there is nothing in the World more esteem'd than Scepters and Crowns; therefore the Glory of Heaven is express'd by a Kingdom, by Thrones, Crowns, and Triumphs. Our Saviour speaks in this Language to his Apostles, *To you who have continued with me in my Afflictions, I appoint a Kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me,* Luke xxii. In another Place he speaks of all his Church in general, *Fear not, little Flock, for 'tis your Father's Pleasure to give you the Kingdom,* Luke xx. And at the last Day he will say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World,* Matth. xxv. And to the Angel of his Church in Smyrna, and all faithful Souls, this divine Saviour makes this Promise; *Be thou faithful unto Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life,* Rev. ii. And to the Angel of the Church of Laodicea; *To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne,* Rev. iii. And St. Paul tells us, *That we run to obtain an incorruptible Crown,* 1 Cor. ix. And when he saw himself at the End of his Race, he cries out, *I have fought the good Fight, I have finished my Course I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his Appearing,* 2 Tim. iv. And St. James speaks in the same Language, *Blessed is the Man that endureth Temptation; for when he is tried, he shall*

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*shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him, James i. Finally, we read that the glorified Saints have Palms in their Hands, and Crowns of Gold upon their Heads, and in their Mouths Songs of Praise; they speak thus to our Saviour; Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, and hast made us to our God, Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on Earth, Rev. iv. 4.*

The great Men of the World delight in gorgeous Apparel, some in perfum'd Garments; therefore the Holy Ghost condescends to this Weakness of Man, and promiseth in Heaven Robes more fragrant than the Perfumes of *Arabia*. He promiseth a Garment whiter than Snow, and brighter than the Light it self. And *Solomon*, when he considers his Spouse, as the Type of the Church, he saith, *The King's Daughter is full of Glory within, her Cloathing is of wrought Gold, she shall be brought unto the King in Raiment of Needle-work.*

And when God himself speaks of the Glory of his Church, which he begins now, and will perfect hereafter, he saith, that he hath adorned her with Gold, Silver, and precious Stones, that he hath cloathed her with fine Linen, with Silk and Needle-work. Therefore the Church speaks in this Manner, I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath cloathed me with the Garments of Salvation, he hath cover'd me with the Robes of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with her Jewels. And if you take Notice of such as stand before the Throne of God, and in the Presence of the Lamb, that worship him Day and Night in his Temple, you shall find them cloathed with long Robes, whitened in the Blood of the Lamb. Look also upon that magnificent Woman of the *Revelations*, the true Type and Representation of the Church, and you shall see her cloathed with the Sun, and a Crown of twelve Stars upon her Head. In a Word, hearken to the Song of the

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the glorified Saints, and you shall hear them speaking to one another, *Let us be glad and rejoyce, and give Honour to God, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made herself ready, and to her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine Linen, clean and white; for the fine Linen is the Righteousness of Saints.*

Men commonly love good Chear, to partake of sumptuous Feasts; therefore the heavenly Delights are represented to us under the Notion of delicious Meats, and exquisite Drinks, of noble Feasts, and magnificent Banquets. In this Manner the Royal Prophet speaks of them in the xxxvi Psalm, *How excellent is thy Loving-kindness, O God! Therefore the Children of Men put their Trust under the Shadow of thy Wings, they shall be abundantly satisfied with the Fatness of thy House, and thou shalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleasures.* And in the lxxv Psalm, *Blessed is the Man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts; he shall be satisfied with the Goodness of thy House, even of thy holy Temple.* And the Prophet Isaiah speaks in the same Language, *In this Mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all People a Feast of Fat Things; a Feast of Wines on the Lees, of fat Things full of Marrow, of Wines on the Lees well refined.* This Consideration causeth a Doctor in the Gospel to say, *Blessed is he that shall eat Bread in the Kingdom of Heaven.* And our Saviour himself saith, that many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit at Table in the Kingdom of Heaven, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. *Ahasuerus's* Feast continued an hundred Days; but the Feast which we shall celebrate in Heaven, and which hath been preparing from the Foundation of the World, shall continue for all Eternity.

Of all Feasts, such as are for nuptial Solemnities are most esteem'd, when they are for Kings and Princes of the Earth; for on such Occasions there are the greatest and the most extraordinary Rejoycings; therefore the Happiness of Heaven is expressed by a Marriage. Our Saviour himself makes Use of this Comparison

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parifon in the xiith Chapter of St. *Matthew*, *The Kingdom of God, faith he, is like unto a King which made a Marriage for his Son.* This caused the glorified Church to fpeak in this manner; *Let us rejoyce and be glad and give Glory to the Lord our God, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come.* Finally, the Holy Ghofthath commanded to write and record thefe Words for ever: *Blessed are thofe that are called to the Marriage-Feaf of the Lamb.*

Some Perfons are very much delighted with the fweet and pleafant Conforts of Mufick; therefore the Holy Ghofth to fignify to us, that in Heaven there fhall be all Manner of Pleafures, and nothing wanting, tells us, that about God's Throne Millions of Angels and glorified Saints fhall fing forth the divine Praise. Befides he acquaints us with the Subftance of their heavenly Songs: When *Ifaiah* mentions thefe wonderful *Seraphims*, that fly round about God's glorious Throne, he faith, *That they cry one to another, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hofts, the whole Earth is full of thy Glory.* And when St. *John* fpeaks of thofe glorified Saints, he faith, that they ftand before his magnificent Throne, playing with their Harps, and finging a new Song, that is to fay, a moft rare and excellent Song; and that they have always in their Mouths, the Song of *Mofes* and of the Lamb, and that Heaven itfelf re-founds with their facred *Hallelujah's*, which fignifies, *Praise God, or fet forth the Praises of God.* There is no ingenious Soul but loves Peace and Reft; for this Caufe the Glory and Happinefs of Paradife is represented under this lovely and pleafant Notion, as in the ivth Chapter of the *Hebrews*; *For we which have believed, do enter into Reft, as he faid, as I have fworn in my Wrath, if they fhall enter into my Reft.* For if *Iefus* had given them Reft, then would he not afterwards have fpo-ken of another Day; there remaineth therefore a Reft to the People of God; for he that is entered into his Reft, he alfo hath ceafed from his own Works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore, enter into that Reft.



*Rest.* This caused old Simeon to cry out, *Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace.* Finally, the holy City is called *Jerusalem*, which signifies a *Vision of Peace*: And God himself makes this Promise, *Behold, I will extend Peace to her as a River,* Isa. lxxv. Phil. iv. Wherefore, if this Peace which God grants to believing Souls in this Life, surpasseth all Understanding, what may we judge shall be the full Enjoyment of an eternal Peace in the Kingdom of Heaven? The Tongues of Men and Angels are not able to express its Dignity and Excellency.

*Lastly,* Because Men are Lovers of Pleasures, Delights and Pomp, and that the most Part seek for nothing but how to drive away their Sorrows, and to recreate themselves with Pastimes; therefore the Felicities of Paradise are represented by Rejoycings, Pleasures and eternal Solemnities, as in *Psalms xxxvi. Thou shalt cause them to drink of the River of thy Pleasure.* And in *Psalms xii. They that sow in Tears shall reap in joy.* And God himself speaking of that most blessed Time, saith, *Behold, I create new Heavens and a new Earth; and the former shall not be remembred, nor come into Mind; but be you glad and rejoyce for ever in that which I create; for behold I create Jerusalem a Rejoycing, and her People a Joy.* Therefore when the Holy Ghost represents the Condition of the glorified Saints, he declares not only, that God will wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and that there shall be no more Sorrow, nor Crying, nor Labour, nor Pain, nor Grief, but he adds over and above, that in their Mouths there shall be Songs of Praise, and upon their Heads, an eternal Joy of Gladness like to a precious Crown, which shall never be taken from them. For this Cause they call so earnestly upon one another, *Let us be glad and rejoyce, and give Glory to the Lord our God,* Rev. xix.

All our Senses shall partake in these heavenly and everlasting Pleasures; our Eyes shall behold with Transports of Joy, the sacred Countenance of our Redeemer; the Riches and wonderful Beauty of his Palace,

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the Glory and Magnificence of his Empire; our Ears shall be delighted with the Musick of the blessed Saints, and with the Harmonies of Angels, and of the Church triumphant; our Smelling shall receive the sweet Perfumes of our Bridegroom, whose Garments are of Myrrh, and the grateful Odours of his Vine always blossoming. Our Palate shall taste the Bread of Angels, the hidden Manna, the Fruits of the Tree of Life, the Waters issuing forth to everlasting Life, and the new Wine of the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Hands shall embrace the Saviour of the World, and with our Feet we shall walk about the Streets of that golden City, the heavenly *Jerusalem*, and we shall follow the Lamb wheresoever he goeth, *Rev. xiv.*

Altho' I speak to you in this manner, I am persuaded, *Christian Souls*, that you understand very well that these Expressions, and such like, are not to be understood in a literal Sense; they are but dark Shadows and imperfect Images of the Advantages of the Life to come. You have not forgot what *St. Paul* saith, that they are Things which Eye hath not seen, Ear hath not heard, and which never entred into the Heart of Man, which God hath prepared for them that love him; *1 Cor. ii.* And that this great God, whose Riches are inexhaustible, doth in us abundantly above what we are able to ask or think, *Eph. iii.* so that when you see before you all the most beautiful, amiable, glorious and excellent Things in the World; you may say in yourselves, without doubt the Glory and Happiness of Heaven is something more than all this; for it is elevated so much above all earthly Enjoyments, and surpasseth so much all the Thoughts and Conceits of Man, that 'tis not possible to describe it in its own Colours, nor to fancy it really as it is.

Think not therefore, *Christian Souls*, to meet in Heaven with a Paradise something like to your Gardens, nor with Flowers, like to such as adorn your pleasant Walks and Fields; nor Fruits like to such as hang upon your Trees: You may be assur'd, that God

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will discover Things infinitely more pleasant and delightful, and more lasting. Fancy not such a City built up as ours is, where Gold, Silver, Pearls, and precious Stones are to be seen. You may expect something more noble and magnificent, than all the richest and most stately Cities of the World. God will cause you to see, not only the Beauty of Silver, the Purity of Gold, the Whiteness of Pearls, and the Brightness of precious Stones; but you shall discover something more beautiful, purer, whiter, brighter, and something more surprizing than any earthly Thing. Think not to receive any material Crown, or to ascend upon Thrones, like to those of Kings and Princes; you may justly fancy something more glorious, and more lasting.

I am also persuaded, Christians, that you expect not in Heaven to find Tables covered, as those of the rich Worldlings, nor to glut yourselves with a Feast, like that of the Nuptials of earthly Princes; without doubt, your Faith hath an Eye to something more heavenly and glorious. Your Soul hungers for more exquisite Dainties, and is athirst for more delicious and sweeter Drinks. You are too well instructed to think to live in Heaven an animal and sensual Life. Such a gross Conceit becomes only the Impostor *Mahomet*, and his imaginary Paradise.

In this Life that we lead upon Earth, there are two Things which chiefly discover our natural Infirmary. The first is our eating and drinking, absolutely Necessary to make up the Breaches, caused by Labour, and the natural Heat, which spend and feed upon the radical Humour, which serves to our Life as Oil to a Lamp. The other is Marriage, appointed by God for the Continuance and Propagation of the human Race. But in Heaven our Life shall be altogether angelical, spiritual, and supernatural. Our Bodies shall be no more subject to Corruption, nor to any Alteration; they shall want no more Food than the Stars do at present, and the Rest of the celestial Bodies. There-

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fore the Holy Ghost speaks expressly that we shall neither hunger nor thirst, that the Sun shall not burn, nor any other Heat trouble us. That is to say, as we shall never be inclinable to eat or drink; the most burning Heats, and the fiercest Flames shall have no Power to hurt our Bodies, when they shall have cast off all sensual and earthly Qualities, and instead of them, shall be clothed with Light and Glory. Therefore at that Time there shall be no Need of propagating the Species, or of multiplying the Persons by Marriage; for we shall not be then subject to earthly Passions, and the Number of the Elect shall be compleat. The Congregation of the Saints shall be full, and the Building of the Church shall be perfectly made up. Therefore our Saviour Jesus Christ assures us, that in the Kingdom of Heaven they shall neither take nor give in Marriage, but that we shall be like the Angels of God, we shall enjoy the Light of their Understanding, the Holiness of their Wills, and the Purity of their Affections.

When the Queen of *Sheba* saw the Glory and State of King *Solomon*, and heard all his excellent Discourses, she was ravished in Admiration, and told this great Prince, *It was a true Report that I heard in mine own Land of thine Acts, and of thy Wisdom; howbeit I believed not the Words, until I came, and mine Eyes had seen it; and behold, the half was not told me; thy Wisdom and Prosperity exceedeth the Fame which I heard; happy are the Men, happy are these thy Servants which stand continually before thee, and hear thy Wisdom.* I am persuaded, believing Souls, that something like to this shall happen to us, when we shall come to the heavenly *Jerusalem*, to behold our Lord Jesus Christ himself, of whom *Solomon* was but a Type and a Figure, for he had but a Spark of his Glory, and but a Beam of his Wisdom. When we shall see this Peaceable King crowned with an heavenly Rainbow, we shall be ravish'd into Admiration, and as it were transported out of ourselves; then we shall speak in this Manner to his divine Majesty, O glorious Monarch, all that I have  
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ever heard or imagined of thy Wisdom, of thy Glory, Riches, Beauty, and extraordinary Pleasure of thy Paradise, is more than true, but 'tis not the thousandth Part of that which I see this Day. O blessed are they that dwell in thy House, and that praise thee without ceasing. Happy are they who behold thy glorious Face, and hear thy divine Wisdom. After that the Queen of *Sheba* had been some Time in the Court of King *Solomon*, she returned back to her own Home; but when we shall be once entered into the Glory and Happiness of Paradise, we shall never depart out again. We shall behold continually this glorious King of Kings, and we shall hear with divine Transports of Joy, the wonderful Expressions of his Wisdom; we shall not only be with him for ever and ever, but we shall always be in him, and he in us.

To take off your Mind from all carnal and worldly Thoughts, the Glory and Happiness of Paradise is represented to us by the Light, as in *Dan. xii. They that be wise shall shine, as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.* And in *Matth. xiii.* our Saviour saith expressly, *That the Righteous shall shine as the Sun, in the Kingdom of his Father.*

Finally, 'Tis promised as the highest Glory and Happiness, that we shall stand before the Throne of God, that we shall sit with Jesus Christ upon his Throne, and that we shall see his Face. *St. John* in *Rev. xxii.* speaks in this Manner, in the Description of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*; he saith, that the Throne of God, and of the Lamb, are in it, that his Servants shall serve him, and see his Face, and that his Name shall be upon their Forehead. When we look upon the Sun, our Faces become not brighter nor more luminous; nay, many times our Eyes thereby dazzle, and our Skin becomes blacker and more swarthy. But when we shall look upon God in his Love and Glory, we shall be perfectly enlightened, and be-

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come brighter and more shining. This appears by *Moses's* Person; when he came down from the holy Mountain, his Face was full of Beams of Light, so that the Children of *Israel* could not endure its Splendour. If therefore this faithful Servant of God had such a bright Countenance, by his Continuance with God upon an earthly Mountain, during the Space of Forty Days and Forty Nights, and by a Sight of some light Expressions of his Glory; what will be, think ye, your Light, and the Brightness of your Countenances, when you shall be raised above the Heavens, to continue with God, and to behold his Face Thousands and Thousands of Ages, and at the End of all that Time, it shall be but the Beginning of that most blessed Contemplation which shall never end?

When we cast our Eyes upon a beautiful Person, we become neither more beautiful nor happier; nothing but an unprofitable *Idea* remains in our Fancy, and many times that also quickly vanisheth away. But when we shall look upon God, we shall become like him, and in this Likeness we shall find Fulness of Joy, of Happiness and Glory; this is promised to us by the Royal Prophet, in *Psal. xxvi. In thy Presence, O God, is Fulness of Joy; and at thy Right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore.* And in *Psal. xvii. As for me, I will behold thy Face in Righteousness, I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy Likeness.* And the beloved Disciple, of the Beloved of the Father, whose Writings are full of Love, confirms this Truth; *Beloved, saith he, now we are the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

You see therefore, Christian Souls, to what high Perfection of Glory and Felicity we have a Right to pretend. For in Heaven God shall not only make us shine as the Sun and the Stars, he shall not only cloath us with the Brightness of the glorified Saints and Angels; but he promises a great deal more, to make us like to himself; he shall not only satisfy us with the

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Fatness of his House, and cause us to drink of the Rivers of his Pleasures; he shall not only fill us with his Treasures, enlighten us with his Brightness, cloath us with his Honours, and crown us with his Glory; but he himself will become our Meat and our Drink, our Treasure, our Sun and Glory: And if I may so speak, to satisfy and perfect our Happiness, God shall, as it were dissolve himself into Rivers and Seas of divine and unspeakable Pleasures. But that I may not be misunderstood in such bold and figurative Language, it shall suffice me to say with *St. Paul*, *That God will be in us all in all*; that is to say, that he will dwell and make his Abode in us, in respect of his Being; and that he will cause us to feel in us his glorious Presence as much as a finite and limited Nature, as ours, is capable of. What the *Jews* have invented of the Manna, which their Fathers fed on in the Wilderness, may justly be appropriated to Almighty God, as he intends to reveal himself to us in Heaven. For there is no Taste but shall be satisfied, no Desire but shall be fill'd. Moreover, God shall be our Meat and our Drink, our Light, also our Cloathing, and all that we can imagine; in him, and his divine Enjoyments we shall find beyond all that we can think or desire. The Knowledge of spiritual and celestial Things, which we attain to here below, is like the Breakings of the Day; and that we shall enjoy hereafter, shall be like that of the Sun, when it shines in our Meridian. But to speak in the Apostle's Language, *Now we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect shall come, then that which is in part, shall be done away. For now we see through a Glass darkly, but then we shall see him Face to Face.* Whilst we continue in this Life, God discovers to us only the Borders of his Wisdom; we cannot understand much of it. But in the Life to come, he shall reveal to us the Depths of his glorious Mysteries, into which the Angels themselves desire to pry. In our Understandings, God shall be as a Sun to enlighten them for ever and ever, and scatter away all

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**Mists of Errors and Mistakes.** At present our Will hath its Imperfections, and oft-times it rebels against God, but then it shall be perfectly sanctified and reformed according to the Image of God. It shall burn with an holy Zeal, and with a Love for him. It shall desire nothing but his Glory, and a Conformity to his holy Will. It shall not only obey God without Resistance, but it shall fly with an holy Earnestness and Speed, to the Performance of his sacred Commands; whilst we remain in the Fetters of this infirm and sinful Flesh, there is always some Filth and Disorder in our Affections; but when we shall come to this State of Glory, God will sanctify them in such a manner, by his Presence, that they shall be purer and cleaner than the Stars, or the Sun-beams; they shall become celestial Fires and divine Flames, proceeding from God's Love to us. In a Word, that Being of Beings who is Perfection itself, that Author and Origin of all Beauty, that Object so exceeding glorious and lovely, shall ravish us in such a manner, that our Understandings shall be continually employed in beholding him; our Wills and Affections in loving and embracing him; and all the Faculties of our Souls shall labour to be united to him, and to be like him. It shall be in this manner, that we shall be made Partakers of the divine Nature. For we must not fancy that we shall be made Partakers of God's infinite Being; for his divine Essence is indivisible, and uncommunicable to the Creature, so that none but God can enjoy it. But God's Holiness shall imprint in our Souls its blessed and glorious Image, and that of all its wonderful Perfections; when God shall shew himself to us as he is, he will cause us to become like him, by producing in us an Impression of his divine Countenance.

It may be you will enquire of me, Whether we shall see God, and how we shall behold him? This Question is so rich and considerable, that it deserves to be examined with an holy and religious Application. I am persuaded, Christians, that you will not be displeased



pleased, not only to hear my Judgment, but that of the holy Scriptures from whence we draw all our Instruction, as out of a Fountain. Some imagine that God cannot be seen, neither in this Life, nor in the Life to come. Their Reasons are very strong and weighty; for *First*, God is of an invisible Nature: This Attribute is ascribed to him by the sacred Writers, as in the xith of the *Hebrews*, the Apostle saith, that *Moses*, by Faith, saw him who is invisible. And in the 1st Epistle to *Timothy*, in the first Chapter he saith, *To the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, be Honor and Glory for ever and ever, Amen.* Secondly, We read in the xxxiiid of *Exodus*, when *Moses* said to God, *I pray thee let me see thy Glory*; God answered him, thou canst not see my Face, for no Man shall ever see my Face and live. Thirdly, St. *John* in 1st Chapter of his Gospel speaketh thus; *No Man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* Lastly, St. *Paul* seems to remove all Doubt, for he saith, not only *That God alone hath Immortality, that he dwells in a Light unto which no Man can approach, and that no Man hath ever seen him*; but he saith more, *that no Man can see him*, 1 Tim. vi.

Others are of a contrary Opinion, That God may be seen in this Life, but that in the Life to come he shall be seen more perfectly. That which encourageth this Opinion is, that God hath put into the Hearts of all his Children, an earnest Desire of seeing his Face, and that in this Contemplation they place their greatest Happiness and Glory. This was *David's* Desire, a Man after God's own Heart, in the fourth *Psal*m, *There be many that say, who shall shew us any Good? Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon us.* And in the xliid *Psal*. *My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come and appear before God?* This is the Desire also of the Prophet *Asaph* in the lxxxviii<sup>th</sup> *Psal*m, *God of Hosts, cause thy Face to shine, and we shall be saved.* Secondly, We have heard *David* say, *I shall see thy*

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*thy Face in Righteousness, I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy Likeness, Psal. xvii.* And St. Paul promiset<sup>h</sup> that we shall see God Face to Face. And St. *John* assures us, *That we shall see God as he is.* Thirdly, In the xiith Chapter of *Numbers*, God speaks in this manner to *Aaron* and *Miriam*, who had murmured against their Brother *Moses*; *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known to him in a Vision, and will speak unto him in a Dream; my Servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine House; with him will I speak Mouth to Mouth, even apparently, and not in dark Speeches, and the Similitude of the Lord shall be behold.* Lastly, We have heard the Voice from Heaven, that represents to us the blessed State of the Glorified, saying, *That they shall see the Face of God.*

If it were lawful for me to engage myself in such an high Meditation, which is above the Capacity of Men and Angels, I should declare to you in few Words, how it may be said that we shall see God, and in what manner 'tis impossible to behold him. But first, we must take notice of two or three Distinctions, which being well understood, will remove the principal Difficulties in this Question.

*First*, God may be consider'd in three several Respects; as he is in himself, and in his proper Being. 'Tis in this Respect, that our Souls earnestly long for him, and desire to draw near, and be united to him, as to their sovereign Good, and the bottomless Fountain of Glory and Happiness. — *Secondly*, As he reveals and discovers himself on Earth, by certain Images and Tokens of his favourable Presence. *Thirdly*, As he shall manifest himself in Heaven by the glorious Images and divine Marks of his Presence.

*Secondly*, We must distinguish the several Kinds of Sight; for there is the Sight of the Body, which looks only upon the Objects, whereof the Images and Species are within the Reach and Capacity of our Eyesight, as are Colour and Light. There is the Sight of the Understanding, which sees and beholds the Things

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that are at a Distance from our Senses, as the spiritual and invifible Subftances, and the effential Forms of the Body. There is alfo the Sight of Faith, which rifeth yet something higher than our Underftandings; as 'tis during our Abode here below, when 'tis enlightened with God's divine Grace, it fees and beholds Things which the Eye of the Body never faw, and the fenfual Underftandings of Men could never comprehend, as the Myfteries of Chriftian Religion, and the Powers of the World to come.

*Laftly*, We muft diftinguifh the Knowledge of the Underftanding, for fometimes 'tis obfcure and confufed, at other times 'tis clear and diftinct. Moreover, that Knowledge which is the cleareft and the moft diftinct is of two Sorts, the one hath Bounds and Limits fuitable to its Subject, that is to fay, fuitable to the Ability and Reach of the Underftanding; the other is abfolute, and of the fame Extent as its Object, that is to fay, as the Thing itfelf which the Underftanding looks upon and beholds.

God, as he is in himfelf, and in his own Effence and Being, hath never been feen by the Eye of the Body, and fhall never be, neither in this Life, nor in the Life to come; for God is a Spirit, and of an invifible Nature, 1 *Tim.* vi. In this Refpect St. Paul affirms, *That God dwells in a Light which no Man can approach unto, that no Man hath ever feen him, nor can fee him*, John iii. But this Good God, who of himfelf is invifible, delights to fhew himfelf to his Creatures in feveral Ways.

*First*, God fhews himfelf to all Men, in the Works of the Creation of the great World, for as St. Paul faith in the firft of the *Romans*, *The invifible Things of God from the Creation of the World are clearly feen, being underftood by the Things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead*. Particularly, he hath given the Light, which is as his eldeft Daughter, and the firft of all outward Productions, and Image and Refemblance of him. For as there is nothing more ample,  
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purser, and more beautiful than the Light: So there is no visible Creature that represents so well, this great God, who is a Being most pure, most beautiful and perfect, the Father of Lights, and the true Sun of our Souls.

*Secondly*, God discovers himself by all the Workings of his wonderful Providence, and chiefly in his extraordinary and miraculous Operations. For when Men perceive Works which exceed all the ordinary Strength of Nature, they are forced to acknowledge, that they come immediately from an infinite Power. As *Pharoah's* Magicians, when they found by their magick Art, that they were not able to counterfeit *Moses's* Miracle, confessed, *That it was the Finger of God.*

*Thirdly*, God discovers himself in his holy and divine Word, which is to us a perfect and divine Looking-Glass, where we may see his Image and Brightness of his Glory; this was *St. Paul's* Judgment, when he saith, *That all we that behold, as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord, with open Face, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord,* 2 Cor. iii. 18.

*Fourthly*, God revealed himself to the Church of *Israel*, in the Ark, the Sign and ordinary Token of his gracious Presence. He spoke to his People from the Midst of the two golden Cherubims, and published his divine Oracles. There he was pleased to discover himself in divers Representations, chiefly in the Cloud and Fire which came down from Heaven. Therefore the Sign, bearing the Name of the Thing signified, is sometimes styled *the Lord*; as in that Passage, where *David* saith, *my Soul is a thirst for God, for the mighty and living God; O when shall I go and appear in the Presence of God!* Psal. xlii.

*Fifthly*, God manifested himself to the Patriarchs and Prophets in Dreams and Visions, by divine Raptures, and prophetic Elevations. In this manner he appeared to the Patriarch *Jacob* in *Bethel*; for when 'tis said that God was at the End of the mystical Ladder,



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der, which reach'd up to Heaven, without doubt, he gave some Sign and Testimony there of his Presence. And when the Prophet *Isaiab* mentions his glorious Throne, he makes no difficulty to say, *I saw the Lord sitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up, and his Train filled the Temple; above it stood the Seraphims, each one had six Wings, with two he covered his Face, and with two he covered his Feet, and with two he did fly; and one cried to another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts, and the whole Earth is full of his Glory, and the Posts of the Door moved at the Voice of him that cried, and the House was filled with Smoak, Isa. vi.* And the Prophet *Micah*, when he speaks of his Vision, he saith, *I have seen the Lord sitting upon his Throne, and all the Host of Heaven, standing at his right Hand and at his left, 1 Kings xxii.* And the Prophet *Daniel* describing one of his Visions, speaks in this Manner; *I beheld, till the Thrones were cast down, and the ancient of Days did sit, whose Garment was white as Snow, and the Hair of his Head like the pure Wool, his Throne was like the fiery Flame, and his Wheels as burning Fire, a fiery Stream issued and came forth from before him, thousand thousands ministred unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.*

Sixthly, God shewed himself to *Moses* in a particular Manner, not only when he appeared to him in *Horeb*, and spoke to him out of the flaming Bush, but especially when God appeared to him in the holy Mountain, and for the Space of forty Days and forty Nights, discoursed with him familiarly, as with a Friend. For at that Time, he set before him such glorious and magnificent Tokens of his divine Presence, that it was almost the same Thing, as if he had seen God himself. God gave him more Light and Knowledge of his Glory, than any other of his Prophets, and revealed himself to him in a more familiar Manner than to any other living Person. Because of these glorious and extraordinary Appearances of God's Presence, and of the Brightness of his Light, which shined

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shined so clear in the Soul of *Moses*, because of that holy Familiarity which he had with God, that he speaks of it in such a Manner, in the xiith Chapter of the Book of *Numbers*, for we cannot understand that Place in a literal Sense; that *Moses* did really see God himself, and that with the Eyes of the Body, he beheld his Being, which is altogether invisible. But we must thus understand it, that never any Man beheld such glorious Expressions of the Godhead with the Eyes of the Body, That never any Man discoursed so familiarly with God as *Moses*; never any Man hath ever had so clear and plain a Knowledge of his great Glory and divine Majesty.

*Seventhly*, God hath often appeared to Men in humane Shapes, and hath given them such visible Expressions of his holy Presence, that such as have seen those Images, tell us, that they have seen God. 'Tis in this Manner that *Jacob* speaks, when he had wrestled with an humane Body, moved, not only by an assisting Angel, but also by God himself, who discovers there his divine Virtue; *I have seen, saith he, God's Face to Face, and my Soul hath been saved*, Gen. xxxii. *Manoah*, the Father of *Sampson*, tells as much, when he had seen the humane Shape in which God was pleased to appear, when he ascended up into Heaven in the Flames of his Sacrifice, *For certain we shall die, for we have seen God*, Judg. xiii. In like manner, when God appeared to *Abraham* in the Shape of a Man, this Man is called the Lord, and *Abraham* bowed himself before him, and worshipped. And at another Time this holy Patriarch saw no less than three humane Shapes which appeared to him at once. Some think that God was visible but in one of these Shapes, and the two others were Angels. That which confirms this Opinion is, that of these three Persons, there is but one that speaks to God, and receives *Abraham's* Adoration, and then he appears no more; the two others are stiled Angels, in the Beginning of the xixth Chapter. But others believe with some ancient

cient Doctors of the Church, that these three human Shapes were a true Image, and living Representation of the most holy, most glorious, and most wonderful Trinity. In this Opinion there is nothing contrary to the Analogy of Faith.

Finally, God hath discovered himself by his Son in a particular manner; he is nam'd therefore, *The Image of God, the Image of the invisible God, and God manifested in Flesh*. God hath not only imprinted in him, some Tokens of his Godhead, and Marks of his Divine Power; he caused him not to walk and move as the borrowed Bodies of the *Old Testament*: He hath not only engraven in him, the perfect Image of all his Divine Perfections; God is not in him in a Shadow, or a Figure, as he was in the Ark, and in *Solomon's Temple*; but he hath dwelt in him bodily, and by his eternal Godhead, as *St. Paul* informs us, *That in him dwelleth bodily*, that is to say, really, and essentially, *all the Fulness of the Godhead*; therefore our Saviour tells *St. Philip*, *That he that hath seen him, hath seen the Father*, John xiv.

This being granted, let us now consider how we see God now here below, and how we shall see him hereafter in Heaven. At present we see him with the Eyes of the Body in his visible Works; and we see his Being also with the Eye of our Understanding, but in a weak and imperfect Manner; we know him with a very obscure and clouded Knowledge. For this Cause *St. Paul* saith very well and truly, *That we know in part, and we prophesy in part*. We see God also with the Eye of Faith; 'tis with this Eye that we see him, as *Moses* did, who is invisible, and that we behold our Lord Jesus Christ, sitting at the Right Hand of God the Father above all the Principalities and Powers, worshipped and adored by all the glorified Church in Heaven. In Paradise we hope to see with the Eyes of our glorified Body, the Images and Marks of the Divinity, so glorious, and magnificent, so beautiful and full of Majesty, that in  
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Comparison of that, whatsoever appeared to the Prophets and Patriarchs in their illustrious Visions, was nothing but Obscurity and Darknes. And with the same Eyes of the Body we shall see God in the Person of our Saviour, who is the Brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person; so that we may well say with Joy, in a full Assurance of Faith, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the last Day upon Earth; and tho' after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, I shall see God in my Flesh, whom I shall see for myself, and my Eyes shall behold, and not another,* Job xix. But for the Essence of God, and for the eternal Godhead, we shall not, nor cannot see it with the Eyes of the Body, let them become never so glorious, incorruptible, and immortal. We shall neither see it with the Eye of Faith, for then Faith shall be totally abolished, and we shall not walk any more by Faith, but by Sight: But we shall see God with the Eye of the Understanding, enlightened with a divine Glory. Now, as we have taken notice, there are two Sorts of Contemplations and Knowledges, the one perfect, proportioned to the Object, which we behold and look upon; the other imperfect, suitable to the Subject that looks and sees. Our future Knowledge of God, shall not be of the first, but of the latter Sort, that is to say, that we shall never see into the Bottom of the Mysteries of God's divine Majesty, and of his Glory. We shall never know perfectly this highest Perfection, this infinite Being, this incomprehensible and glorious Godhead. For Things are in their Actions as they are in their Beings, and in their Abilities: Now in the most glorious State of Heaven, our Beings and Abilities shall be limited and circumscribed: Therefore it shall be absolutely impossible for us to comprehend perfectly the Being of God, which is infinite in itself, and in all its wonderful Perfections. The Holy Angels themselves, the Cherubims, and Seraphims, these Creatures of Light  
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and Glory, are not able to pry into these bottomless Depths, they are not able to approach this infinite Light. In a Word, it belongs only to God himself, to comprehend and understand perfectly, the infinite Glory, and the highest Perfections of the Godhead.

Altho' our Sight shall not be able to search into the Bottom of these Depths of the Divinity, tho' we shall never be able to comprehend perfectly the infinite Being of God; nevertheless we hope to behold openly this wonderful Object, and to obtain as much Knowledge of it as shall be requisite to render us perfectly happy. For as when our Eye beholds the Noon-Sun, it cannot stedfastly look upon it, nor receive all its Beams, but it partakes of as much as is necessary to enlighten it; and when there shall be a thousand Suns, our Eyes would never make use of more Light than they do at present. Likewise, in beholding the Father of Lights, this beautiful Sun of our Souls, 'tis altogether impossible to admit the Immensity of its Beams; but we shall partake of as much as shall be necessary to drive away all our Darkness, and to fill us full of perfect Light, to make us become Light in the Lord, and to cause us to shine for ever as so many Stars and little Suns. As an empty Vessel, when 'tis cast into the Sea, comprehends not all its Waters, but receives only enough to fill it up, so that there is no Part empty: Thus when we shall be cast into the Ocean of the Godhead, we shall not be able to comprehend and receive God's infinite Glory and Happiness, but we shall receive and comprehend as much as shall content all our Desires, and satisfy all our craving Appetites. So that there shall be nothing at all wanting in us, which might be expected in the highest Felicity of an human Creature.

I do not say, in the highest Felicity, absolutely without Limitation; for there are two Sorts of Felicities, the one absolutely perfect, beyond which there can be nothing expected. This Felicity or Happiness is only to be found in God. The other is perfect, in a cer-

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tain Degree. As the perfect Happiness of the Angels is to attain to that Degree of Glory, of which the angelical Nature is capable. Likewise the perfect Happiness of Man, is to enjoy all that Blessedness, which the human Nature alone and single is able to enjoy; I must say the single Nature of Man, to distinguish it from that which is united to the Person of the eternal Son of God. For by this Union, this hath attained to an incommunicable Glory, of which other Creatures cannot partake in the same Perfection; it hath attained to an Happiness, far above the Glory of all the Children of God, and of all the holy Angels of Heaven, far above what they can or may expect.

Again, I may say, that there is a supreme and perfect Happiness independent, which subsists of itself, without any foreign Assistance. This Kind of Happiness is only to be found in God: For as he is of himself an infinite Being, he borrows nothing from others, and of himself is absolutely and perfectly happy. The other Happiness is that which proceeds not out of our selves, but is derived to us from another, such is the Glory and Happiness of the Angels. This Lesson the Holy Ghost teacheth us in these Words, *God puts Light into his Angels*; that is to say, that these holy Spirits have nothing of Light or Glory in them, but what is derived to them from the Father of Lights, and his gracious Aspect. Such also is the Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator. Therefore he speaks thus to God his Father, *Glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee*, John xvii. In a Word, such shall be our Glory and Happiness; for as we have our Being from God, 'tis from him that we derive our Well-being; also 'tis from him only that we can expect all our Glory and Bliss.

From hence you may easily understand, that God is the only Object, and the only Source of our eternal Glory and future Happiness. If you enquire from me what shall be the essential Form; I answer, that it shall be our Likeness and Resemblance with God; which

which shall be as perfect as a human Creature is capable of. Now this Resemblance and Similitude shall consist in three Things, in a pure and bright Light, which shall not be mixed with the least Obscurity; in a perfect and compleat Holiness, where there shall not be the least Blemish; and in an infinite and unalterable Joy and Content, where there shall never be the least Cloud of Grief; but of this we have sufficiently treated already.

Some there are that enquire whether in Paradise there shall be an Equality, or an Inequality in Glories and Happineffes. This Question is more curious than necessary. For we need not enquire whether there shall be any more or less happy than ourselves. It should suffice us for our Comfort, to know, that if we be true Believers, and truly Penitent; if we fear God as we ought, if we serve him with a religious Mind until the last Gasps; that in such a Case we shall attain to the Glory of the Children of God, and possess with them a perfect and eternal Happineff. Nevertheless, that we may seem to omit nothing which might give Satisfaction to every believing Soul, I shall examine this Particular, but it shall be without advancing any new Thing, which I have not seen in the holy Gospel, nor learned from the true Doctor of our Souls. I shall declare the Opinion of the most Learned upon this rich and excellent Subject. Afterwards I shall add my own, which I submit, as the rest of this Treatise, to the Judgment of the wiser and more Learned Persons, who are better acquainted than I am, with the spiritual and heavenly Enjoyments.

Some believe, that in Paradise there shall be every where the same Glory and Happineff, equal and uniform in every Person that shall enjoy it. Their principal Reasons are: *First*, That we can have no Glory nor Happineff, but that which hath been purchased for us by the Death and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that as this glorious Saviour hath purcha-

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fed this Glory and Happiness for all the Elect equally, they shall all enjoy it in the highest Degrees and Perfection. *Secondly*, That the Holiness of all the Blessed shall be perfect; therefore, as they shall be all perfectly holy, they shall be all likewise perfectly happy in the same Degree. *Thirdly*, That our Saviour saith expressly without any Exception, *That the Saints shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, Matth. xxiii. Now the Sun is the King of the Stars, and the brightest of all the heavenly Bodies. *Fourthly*, That the Elect are represented in Heaven as so many Kings, having upon their Heads Crowns of Gold, Rev. i. 4, 5. Now there is no Inequality between Kings; for each of 'em is in Possession of Sovereignty, and an independent and supreme Authority. *Fifthly*, That Jesus Christ represents to us the last Transactions of the World, by the Parable of a Father of a Family, who at the End of the Day, bestows the same Salary upon every one that hath laboured in his Vineyard, Matth. xx. *Sixthly*, That 'tis said in general Terms, *That we shall see God Face to Face, and that we shall see him as he is*, 1 Cor. xiii. 1 John iii. And that in this blessed Vision shall consist the chief Happiness of Man. *Lastly*, That after the Resurrection, *God shall be unto us All in All*; which Expression declares the highest and most compleat Happiness and Glory.

Others think the contrary, that in Heaven there shall be an Inequality of Glory, and several degrees of Happiness. This their Opinion they strengthen chiefly with two Passages of Holy Scripture; the one, in Job. xiv. where Christ saith to his Apostles, *In my Father's House there are many Mansions*. The other is in 1 Cor. xxv. where St. Paul discoursing at large of the Happiness of the Saints after the Resurrection, saith, *There is one Glory of the Sun, another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars; for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory; so also is the Resurrection of the Dead*.

There are some that are not content to believe an Inequality of Glory and Happiness, but undertake farther



farther to discourse of this Matter, with as much Confidence, as if God had admitted 'em to the Knowledge of his eternal Secrets; as if he had discovered to them all the Wonders of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, more plainly than to his beloved Disciple. They tell us, that there shall be not only divers Degrees of Glory and Happiness, but they affirm, who they are that shall obtain such and such Degrees. They determine absolutely, and prescribe what Glory shall belong to Virgins, what shall be that of Confessors, and what shall be that of Martyrs. In a Word, some are so puffed up with an high Conceit of themselves, and of their meritorious Acts, that they make an open Profession of being of the number of such as shall obtain the highest Degrees of Glory and Happiness.

But my Opinion is, that the Truth is to be found between these two Extreams. I shall not prescribe a Law to the Consciences of any, in a Matter whereof the Decision is not absolutely necessary to Salvation: Yet we may say, that in Heaven there shall be divers Degrees of Glory and Happiness, but we dare not describe them, nor venture to apply them to any Person, or to tell who of us shall possess such and such Degrees. This were a bold Presumption against Heaven, and an Attempt upon the forbidden Fruit. Instead of being serviceable to others, we should wilfully lose ourselves: For such as are so audacious, to search into the Divine Majesty, shall be swallowed up in his Glory, *Prov. xxv.*

And tho' we verily believe Degrees of Glory, yet we may say, without Offence to any Person, that this Belief is not to be established upon the forementioned Passages, from whence we cannot make any such Conclusion; for in *St. John xiv.* our Saviour saith not that there are divers Degrees of divine Mansions, whereof some are richer and more glorious than others; but only, that in his Father's House there are many Mansions. The Meaning of our Divine Saviour is clear as the Day; he had an Intent to raise up the

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drooping Courage of his holy Apostles, and to comfort them in his Absence ; for that Purpose he assures them, that he was going to lodge in an House, where there is not only Room for himself, but also for them, and for all that shall believe in him, through their Teaching. He expounds his Words plainly in the xviith Chapter of the same Gospel, where he speaks to God in this Manner, *I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou hast given me.* For the other Text in 1 Cor. I beseech you, devout Souls, read over the Apostle's Words, and consider with a religious Observation, what goes before, and what follows after. You shall find that the Apostle designs not to compare the Saints, the one with the other, but only to discover the Difference which is between our Bodies as they are in this corruptible and mortal Life, and as they shall be when they shall have put on Incorruption and Immortality. Therefore, when he hath said, *There is one Glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, another of the Stars, for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory.* He doth not add, likewise, so shall be the Glory of one blessed Person differing from another ; but he saith, *So shall be the Resurrection from the Dead ; the Body is sown in Corruption, it shall be raised in Incorruption ; 'tis sown in Dishonour, 'tis raised in Glory ; 'tis sown in Weakness, 'tis raised in Power ; 'tis sown a natural Body, 'tis raised a spiritual Body.*

What is it therefore that may incline us to believe these divers Degrees of Glory and Happiness ? I answer, *First*, The divers and different Pains and Punishments of the Damned. For as in Hell there shall be divers Degrees of Torments ; likewise 'tis very probable that in Heaven, there shall be divers Degrees of Happiness, and several Degrees of Glory. *Secondly*, God to declare his Divine Wisdom, which is various in all Things, bestows at present all his Blessings and Riches with a wonderful Variety, and admirable Order. Thus you may see in Nature, that

that God hath scattered up and down the World, divers Gifts and Excellencies ; for Example, the Smell and Beauty of Roses, is different from that of the Lillies ; the Brightness of the Diamonds, is not like that of Rubies ; the Light of the Sun differs from that of the Moon and Stars. 'Tis very probable, that above all the Heavens, there shall be divers Degrees of Light and Glory. Among the holy Angels, there are Distinctions of Honour, and some Dignities are named *Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, and Powers*. As therefore amongst the Angels there are divers Degrees of Glory ; 'tis also very probable that the same Order shall be observed amongst the glorified in Heaven. Besides, as in the Church militant, the Graces of God differ very much ; so the Souls of the Faithful are not the same in all Respects, they have different Qualities and Excellencies. There are in them divers Degrees of Light, of Knowledge, of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Holiness. Likewise, according to the Analogy of Faith, there shall be also in the Church glorified, divers Degrees of Glory and Happiness ; and the rather, because, Glory is nothing else, but the Completion and Perfection of Grace, This Reason is so much the stronger, because of the Parable of the Talents : Jesus Christ bestows upon his Servant a Glory proportionable to the former Riches of his Grace. None can imagine that the Words relate to God's Favours distributed to his Children on Earth, for our Lord speaks of that which he intends to do for them, when he shall come down from Heaven to judge the World. The Words relate to the Time when he shall say to such as have well employ'd the Talents of his Mercy, *Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter into the Joy of thy Lord*. They relate also to the Time when he shall cause the unprofitable Servant to be cast into utter Darknes, where there shall be *Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth*. I ought not to forget what we read on this Subject, 2 Cor. ix. *He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly ; and he which soweth*

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*bountifully, shall reap also bountifully.* They are St. Paul's Words, which expressly declare an Inequality of Glory and Happiness to be expected amongst the Rewards in Heaven. It may be also worthy of our Observation, that the Felicities of Heaven are represented to us by a Feast, where all partake of the same Meats, but some are advanc'd to a more honourable Room than others. This, as I conceive, may be gather'd from our Saviour's Words, *Many shall come from the East, and from the West, and shall sit at Table in the Kingdom of Heaven, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.* It may also be understood from that other Passage, where *Lazarus* is carried by the holy Angels into *Abraham's Bosom.* Lastly, I ground my Opinion upon the xii<sup>th</sup> Chapter of *Daniel*, where this blessed Prophet, when he had spoken in general terms of the future Happiness of the Faithful, who shall rise to eternal Life, he offers to mention some, on whom God hath bestowed more Light upon Earth, and whose Ministry he hath made use of, to bring many Souls to Salvation; amongst these he seems to put divers Degrees of Glory; *They that are wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that bring many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever.* From this Text one may apparently conclude, that as the Light of the Firmament differs much from that of the bright Stars; and as among the Stars there is a Diversity of Light, in like Manner there shall be divers and different Degrees of Glory amongst the Blessed in Heaven.

Now in answer to that Argument, that Jesus Christ hath purchased for us the Glory and Happiness of Heaven, that therefore this Glory and Happiness should be equal, I confess this Reason is weighty. I intend not absolutely to deny it, but I shall offer several Things to the Consideration of the pious and devout Souls who shall peruse this Treatise. *First*, That altho' the Blood of Jesus Christ hath purchased for us Heaven; and that we are not able to claim it by our most regenerate Actions, or merit it by our most  
painful



painful Sufferings and Martyrdom; because that when we have performed all that is commanded, our Saviour requires us to say, *We are unprofitable Servants, because we have done nothing but what we are bound to do*, Luke xvii. And because his holy Apostle assures us, that *When all Things are reckoned up, the Sufferings of this present Time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed to us*, Rom. viii. Nevertheless, God is so good, merciful and bountiful, that he bears with our Imperfections, that he rewards as a Father, with a free Reward, all the good Works of his Servants, chiefly the Works of Charity. Therefore Jesus Christ tells his Apostles, and generally all the Faithful; *Whosoever shall give unto you to drink a Cup of Water, because you are Christ's, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his Reward*. And because 'tis the Custom of the eastern People, to warm their Drink, therefore to give a Cup of cold Water may be reckoned the smallest Assistance. Our Saviour saith, *Whosoever shall give unto one of these little Ones to drink a Cup of cold Water only, in the Name of a Disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his Reward*, Mat. x. If such as bestow a Cup of cold Water for God's Sake, are rewarded in Heaven, what may not those bountiful Soulexpect there, who now spend their Estates in charitable Deeds? Besides, we have heard a Prophet tell us, that all such as by the Light of their Doctrines, and the Holiness of their Lives, lead many Souls to their Salvation, shall shine for ever in Heaven, as so many bright Stars. It stands with Reason; for if our Saviour will in his infinite Mercy reward such a small Kindness as the Gift of a Draught of Water, to one of his Children; they shall excel in Glory, who spend for his Sake in his Quarrel, every Drop of their Blood, and by their Deaths confirm his holy Gospel: *This is a faithful Saying, if we die with Jesus Christ, we shall also live with him; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him*. But that which seems to me yet stronger, which makes for this Purpose, is, that all the spiritual

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tual Graces which are bestowed upon us in this Life, proceed from the Holy Ghost, purchased for us by the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his precious Blood. Now these Graces are different and various. Therefore as there are divers Degrees in Grace, why should not there be also divers Degrees in Glory, since both have been purchased for us with the same Price, by the Death and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ?

The other Argument drawn from the Happiness and Perfection of the Glorified is rational, but not infallible. For several Diamonds may be perfect in their Kind, so that the clearest Eye cannot take Notice of any Default: Nevertheless, they may differ in Weight and Price. All the Stars have their Perfection and Light, nevertheless one Star differs from another Star in Glory; all the Angels of Heaven are perfectly happy and holy, and yet there is a great Inequality amongst them in Glory and Dignity. Likewise, altho' all the Blessed shall attain to a perfect Holiness, in my Judgment, that cannot hinder the Diversity of Degrees of Glory and Happiness.

I acknowledge also, that the other Objection, drawn from these Words, *The Just shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father*, is not to be despised, but it concludes nothing to the Purpose. For if you should cut out excellently well, some Orbs of Crystal, of different Sizes, some greater some less, and should put them all in the Sun; they would be all full of Light in every Part, every one of them would represent the beautiful Image of that Sun that looks upon them, so that it may very well be said of them all, that they shine as the Sun. Nevertheless, according to their Brightness and Size, they receive more Light, and the Sun seems greater in the one than in the other. To the other Objection, that all the Glorified in Heaven are named Kings; I answer, that this is not to be understood in a literal Sense, no more than when 'tis said, that they had on their Heads Crowns of Gold.  
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That I may continue in the same Comparifon, I may fay, that all Kings have a fovereign Majefty, which acknowledges none above it, but God from whom it proceeds; and neverthelefs, fome have a greater Power and Riches than others: Likewise, all the glorified Saints fhall enjoy a fovereign and perfect Happinefs, and receive it immediately from God; but this cannot hinder them from differing from one another in Glory. I anfwer next, the other Argument taken out of the Parable of the Father of the Family, who at the Evening of the Day rewarded equally all his Labourers that had been employ'd in his Vineyard, giving to every one of them a Penny: That Parables are as Pictures, in which, befides the Thing intended to be drawn, there are many Particulars, which ferve but as Flourifhes to adorn the Pieces. If we fhould confider every Particular of this Parable, we might conclude from hence, that amongft fuch as fhall be faved, there fhall be fome murmuring againft God, who fhall envy their Companions; which is a grofs Abfurdity to imagine. The Design of our Saviour is not to fpeak of the Equality of the glorified Saints, but his Intent is to fhew, that thofe whom God calls firft, fhould not defpife the others; becaufe God, who doth with his own what he pleafeth, is able to make them equal, and to beftow upon them the fame Advantages. Laftly, as every one whom the good Man of the Houfe fent into his Vineyard at feveral Times of the Day, received for their Salary a Penny; in the fame manner, whomfoever God calls into his Church effectually, at any time, nay, at the Hour of Death, they fhall receive from his infinite Bounty, eternal Life; but from hence we cannot conclude any Thing contrary to this Truth, that in Heaven there fhall be divers Degrees of Glory.

The greateft Difficulty in my Judgment, is in this Allegation, *That we fhall fee God Face to Face, and that he will be all in all*, 1 Cor. xiii. 1 Cor. xv. Neverthelefs we may fay, that as all the Damned in Hell fhall lofe  
all

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all Sight of God, yet that cannot hinder the divers Degrees of Pain and Torment. Likewise, all the glorified in Heaven shall see God; but this Sight which all enjoy, cannot remove the Inequality of their Glory and Happiness. As when all Men look upon the same Sun, but several receive the Benefit of its Beams in a different Manner; thus we shall all behold the same God, but the gracious Aspect of his Countenance shall be cast upon us variously, and produce in us divers Effects. We may also make use of another Comparison: As when we cast many empty Vessels into the same Sea, they are filled up; so that it may be said of them, that the Sea is in them all. Yet some may be more capacious, and receive more Water than others. Likewise, all the Saints shall enter into the same wonderful Ocean of the Godhead, they shall be all filled up to the Brim with his glorious Presence; so that God shall be all in all. Nevertheless we shall receive different Measures of the Waters issuing forth to eternal Life. In a Word, as God will cast headlong all the Reprobates into the same Lake of Fire and Brimstone, and yet there shall be divers Degrees amongst them of Punishments; so God shall cause all the Elect to drink out of the same River of Pleasure; but there shall be a Difference amongst their Degrees of Glory. Moreover, this Passage may be thus understood: *God shall be all in all*; that is to say, he shall be to us all Riches, Glory, Light, Meat, Drink, Pleasure, &c. In my Judgment we cannot conclude from hence, that he is to be in all equally.

If any have other Thoughts, or is of another Opinion, I shall not offer to condemn him, nor undertake to contradict him: For I conceive, that since Almighty God hath hid the Glories and Happiness of Heaven, and covered them over with a thick Cloud, on purpose to limit our too curious Inquiry, we cannot mention them with too much Modesty and Respect. Only I must make another Remark for the Comfort of devout Souls, whose Thoughts and Minds

are



*against the Fears of* DEATH. 469

are in Heaven; that when we affirm, that there shall be different Degrees of Glory in Paradise, we must not fancy that this shall be any Prejudice to the perfect Happiness of the Glorified. For if I may once again make use of the Comparison of the Sun-beams, and of the Waters of the Sea, I cannot find any more proper for this Purpose. As all Eyes that look upon the clear Sun, without Cloud or Mist, receive its Ray in a different Manner, yet they have all Light enough to see to guide themselves, and to rejoyce in this beautiful Light that enlightens them; if some take in a greater Measure of that Light, this hinders not the rest from enjoying also a Sufficiency: So shall it be with all the glorified Souls, when they shall behold God the Father of Lights, the true Sun that shall shine for ever and ever. If any of them shall have more or less of Light, that shall not concern or prejudice their sovereign Happiness, for every one of them shall enjoy as much as they shall be able to contain, or shall be necessary to compleat their Joy, and perfect their Happiness. And as when we cast into the Sea many empty Vessels, some greater, some less, the greater contains more Water, and the lesser not so much; yet they all receive enough to be filled up to the Brim. If the least of these Vessels had the Knowledge to speak, they would not complain of the greater, for containing more than they, because they have all as much as they can either desire or expect. Likewise, when the Saints shall be admitted into the bottomless Sea of Glory and Happiness, they shall be filled all up to the Brim, so that they shall not be able to desire any more. They shall be all according to their different Capacities, perfectly and entirely happy. Consider therefore, Christian Soul, that if thou enjoyest so much Satisfaction and Delight as thou art capable of, altho' others may have something more, thou art not less happy for their Overplus. There is none but God alone, who according to the Infiniteness of his Being, possesseth an unmeasurable and infinite Glory and Happiness.

This

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This Bottomless Source of Glory and Bliss, shall for ever and ever overflow all the Glorified in Heaven, and satisfy their Souls with unspeakable Delights.

You may ask, *Christians*, in what Part of the great World shall God cause us to enjoy so many rare Pleasures and heavenly Contentments? Where shall he produce so many Treasures and Riches? Where will he discover so much Glory and Splendour? In what Part doth he intend to shew so many Divine Marks of his gracious Presence? I answer, that this Place is above the elemental World, above all the Heavens, that appear before our Eyes, and that roll about us. If we will understand this, we must remember that the holy Scripture makes Mention of three Heavens. The first is the large Extent of the Air, distinguished by the Learned into three Regions. In this Sense 'tis to be understood when it speaks of the Birds of the Air. The second Heaven comprehends the heavenly Spheres, the Globes, that are between the Moon and the Firmament, where are all the fixed Stars; and if beyond this there be any other Sphere, whereof the Motion is so powerful and swift, as to carry with it the inferiour Globes, and to cause them to roll round in the Space of four and twenty Hours. Of this Heaven, *David* speaks in *Psal. xix. The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy Work; he hath put in them a Tabernacle for the Sun.* Now above all these heavenly Spheres mentioned by the Astronomers, (some reckon up nine or ten, and others more;) there is yet a third Heaven spoken of by *St. Paul*, 2 Cor. xii. *I know, saith he, a Man in Christ, which was taken up into the third Heaven; I know that he was taken up into Paradise, and heard Words which cannot be spoken, which are not possible for Man to utter.* The holy Apostle leaves no Manner of Difficulty; for the third Heaven he names Paradise, where he heard unspeakable Words, which are not possible to be uttered.

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The celestial Globes roll about continually, but this third Heaven, for its Excellency, is stiled, the Heaven, and is fixed in an eternal Settlement. And as much as these beautiful Orbs have a greater Light and Glory than the Air and the inferiour Bodies; so much the more doth this third Heaven excel them. 'Tis my Judgment, that *Solomon* means this third Heaven, situate above all the rest, which exceeds them so much in Beauty and Glory, when he speaks to God, *of the Heavens, and of the Heaven of Heavens*, 1 Kings viii. That is to say, the most excellent, the highest and the most glorious of all the Heavens *are not able to contain thee*; and God himself declares, by his holy Prophets, *The Heavens are my Throne, and the Earth is my Footstool*, *Isaiah lxvi.* For in this high Heaven God hath placed his Throne where he discovers his Glory, and the Brightness of his luminous Countenance. There the Seraphims fly, and thousand thousands worship him, and ten thousand Millions stand continually before him, *Isaiah vi. Dan. vii.* Here the blessed Soul of our Saviour Christ ascended as soon as it had left the Body, according to what he promised to the crucified Thief; *Verily I say unto thee, this Day thou shalt be with me in Paradise*, *Luke xxiii.* Into this Place our glorious Saviour entered both in Soul and Body, after his Resurrection; and here it was that *St. Stephen* saw him, when he cried out, *I see the Heavens open, and Jesus Christ sitting at the Right Hand of God*, *Acts vii.* And to this Place the Souls of all such as die in his Favour are carried up. Therefore *St. Paul* to the *Hebrews* mentions immediately after the thousands of Angels, *The Spirits of just Men made perfect, and the Church and Congregation of the First-born, whose Names are written in Heaven.* In short, 'tis the glorious Seat, where we hope that God will receive us both in Soul and Body, at that Day, when we shall be taken up into the Air, above the Clouds of Heaven, to be for ever with the Lord Jesus.

Some

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Some enquire what shall become then of this elemental World? Whether this Heaven that appears to our Eyes, and this Earth which sustains us, shall perish? Or whether they shall remain yet after the great Day of Doom?

Certain prophane Atheists are persuaded, that the World shall remain for ever, as it doth at present, and that there shall be no kind of Alteration. The Apostle St. Peter hath prophesied of these Persons and described them in their own Colours; *There shall come at the last Day Mockers, walking after their own Lusts, saying, Where is the Promise of his coming, for since the Fathers are asleep, all Things continue in the same Manner, since the Beginning of the World.* I need not trouble myself to answer such Impieties: I speak to none but to devout Souls, who reverence the Divinity of the holy Scriptures, and are fully persuaded of the Truth of all the Articles of our Creed.

When Men oppose a false Doctrine, they often run from one Extremity to another. Therefore some imagine, that the World shall totally perish; and that as God hath made the Heavens and Earth, and the rest of the Elements out of nothing, he will reduce them all again into the same nothing, and that he intends to create others, more beautiful, more holy, and far more glorious. There are two Sorts of Expressions that seem to favour this Opinion. The first speaks of the Heavens and of the Earth, as of perishing and decaying Creatures. In this Manner David discourseth of them in *Psal. cii.* after him the Apostle to the Hebrews; *Thou, Lord, hast established the Earth, and the Heavens are the Works of thy Hands; they shall perish, but thou shalt endure; they shall wax old as doth a Garment, and as a Vesture shall they fold them up, and they shall be changed.* And our Saviour tells us in *Matth. xxiv.* *The Heavens and the Earth shall pass away, but my Words shall not pass away.* Especially the Words of St. Peter, in the *ii<sup>a</sup>* Epistle and the *iii<sup>a</sup>* Chapter, are remarkable. *The Heavens shall pass away*



away with a Noise, and the Elements shall melt with Heat, and the Earth with the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up. The other Passages mention new Heavens and a new Earth, as in *Isa. lxxv. Behold, I create new Heavens, and a new Earth, and the former Things shall be remembered no more.* Likewise in *2 Pet. iii.* before mentioned, *We look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, according to his Promise, wherein dwelleth Righteousness.* And in *Rev. xxi. I saw a new Heaven, and a new Earth; for the first Heaven, and the first Earth were passed away, and there was no more Sea.* Moreover, *St. Paul, in the Hebrews, speaks of the World to come; from hence some conclude, that the old World ought to be abolished, and that God will create a new World.*

There is no Man that is a Christian, can doubt of that wonderful Change which shall happen to the World at the last Day, if he considers the forementioned Passages of holy Scripture, especially that of *St. Peter, The Heavens shall pass away with a Noise, and the Elements shall melt with Heat, and the Earth with the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up.* As the Walls of *Jericho* fell at the Sound of the Priests Trumpets; so this great World shall be turned upside down at the Blowing of the Archangel's Trumpet. Our Reason alone being enlightned by divine Revelations, seems to confirm this Truth; for since the House infected with a spreading Leprosy, was to be demolished; how much rather ought the World to be destroyed, because in it is to be seen apparently the Spots and Blemishes of Sin, the spiritual Leprosy?

But tho' this great Fabrick of the World, must be ruined and turned upside down, we do not believe that it shall be reduced to Nothing. Its Qualities shall be changed, and it may be its Form shall be altered, but its Substance and Matter shall continue always the same. For, *First, As God hath created the World for his own Glory, he cannot be for ever disappointed of*

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the Intent of his Creation. And because this World hath not glorified him as it ought, he will put it into a Condition proper to glorify him answerable, to the Purpose, for which he drew it out of Nothing. *Secondly*, Since this World was created to serve Man, as a Looking-glass, to behold the eternal Power of God, and that this beautiful Looking-glass hath been spotted and sullied by Sin, 'tis yet possible to cleanse it, and make it brighter, that it might represent its Creator better, and shew forth a more perfect Image of his divine Majesty. *Thirdly*, Since God doth nothing in vain, there is no Likelihood that he should destroy the World totally, and reduce the primitive Matter to Nothing, from whence 'twas drawn, to create new Matter, because he is able of this old Matter to make a new Earth, and new Heaven, as pure and undefiled, as if the Matter had been newly created. *Fourthly*, Sin hath spoiled and disfigured the Works of the Creation, but it hath not touched, neither the first Matter nor its Being; so that God can take away this Deformity, and remove this Deformity, without touching the Matter, which of itself is innocent. In Man, the little World, and the Compendium of the great, I find a beautiful and perfect Image of that which God will do with the whole World. God intends not to destroy the Substance of our Souls, but only to purge them from all vicious Qualities, and beautify them with Righteousness and true Holiness; so that they shall be as the Angels of Heaven: Likewise, he intends not to destroy the Substance of our Bodies, but he will free them from Corruption, from Death, and cloath them with Glory and Immortality; so that this vile Body shall be rendred conformable to the glorious Body of the Son of God, and shall shine as the Sun: So God will not altogether destroy the World, and abolish its Substance, but he will rectify all its Imperfections, and add to it a greater Glory. If it be lawful for me to discover here all my Thoughts; I must say, that I put a greater Difference between  
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Heaven and Earth; for the Earth is altogether corrupt and spoiled with Sin, 'tis the Earth chiefly, that groans under the Burden of so many Iniquities, which reign in it; but if Heaven is guilty of any Crime, it is because it hath given Light to such as have been Rebels against the Divine Majesty, and assisted the cursed Earth by its favourable Influences. Because of this great Difference, 'tis my Opinion, that the Earth shall be destroyed by Fire, and that all its beautiful Buildings and proud Palaces shall be turned into Ashes. But the Change which shall happen in Heaven, shall only be to make it more beautiful and brighter, that the Children of God may have there a more glorious Palace. This seems to have been typified in the ceremonial Law; for as we have already observed, speaking of that which shall happen to the Soul and Body, that when an earthen Vessel was defiled, it was to be broken to Pieces, but such Vessels, as were of a more precious Metal, as of Brass, or of Silver, or of Gold, were to be purified with Fire: Likewise, the Earth, with all its Works shall pass through the Flames, so that it shall lose its present Shape and Qualities. But Heaven, that is as Brass, or rather as fine Silver, shall only be purified by the Fire of the last Judgment. If you remove the Cause, you take away also the Effect; if you remove away Sin, you also remove its Punishment. Now 'tis, because of Man's Sin, that the World hath, and shall see so great a Change. Therefore, as God, by his infinite Mercy, hath forgiven Man's Sin, 'tis also to be expected from the same Mercy, that he will not totally destroy the World, but that he will rather free it from Corruption, unto which our Sins had made it subject.

Unless God deals in this Manner, our Joy and Comfort seems not compleat, and God appears not perfectly satisfied and reconciled. While a Subject continues in Rebellion, and in the Displeasure of his Prince; not only his Person is pursued and punished, but all that belongs to him bears the Marks of Wrath



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and Indignation of the Prince whom he hath offended. His Dwelling-House is commonly pulled down, his Woods are cut and mangled, and his Inheritance is destroyed : But when he has made his Peace, his House is built up again, all Signs of the King's Displeasure are taken away, and every thing appears with a more pleasant Countenance. Thus, because of our Rebellion and our Treason against God, he hath punished the World for our Sakes, and hath made it sensible of his Wrath : But now that our Peace is made; or rather, God having made Peace by the Blood of his Son, we may justly expect that he will remove all Signs of his Displeasure and Revenge. I remember upon this Subject, what *David* said to God, when he saw the Angel destroying *Jerusalem*, *I have sinned, and I have done wickedly, but these Sheep, what have they done?* 2 Sam. xxiv. In the same Manner every Believer may say to God, Lo, I have sinned, O Lord, I and my Brethren have done wickedly, but these inanimate Creatures, what have they done? Our Sins have defil'd the Earth: And all that may be objected against Heaven, is, to have yielded Light and Assistance to us Rebels. Since therefore thou hast blotted out our Sins, and pardoned our Rebellions, spare these harmless Creatures, which cannot be punished but for our Sakes.

At present we may without Difficulty understand the forementioned Passages of Holy Scripture, and such as tend to the same Purpose. For when *David* and *St. Paul* assures us, *That the Heavens shall perish and they shall be changed as a Garment*; I answer, that they shall perish in respect of their Qualities, but not of their Substance; and that the Change shall not be as when one Garment is cast off and another is taken; but as when the Spots and Blemishes of an old Garment are taken away and it becomes fresher. When your Cloathing is grown old and worn out, if it were in your Power to make it become new again, and as beautiful as ever it was, you would never think of seeking for new Stuff. That which is impossible to  
Men,



Men, is possible with God, *Luke vi.* And when our Saviour in *St. Matthew's Gospel* saith, *That the Heavens and the Earth shall pass away, but my Words shall not pass away*; I might affirm, that these Words are to be understood comparatively, that is to say, that the Heavens and the Earth shall pass away, rather than that the Words of God should fail of an Accomplishment. Our Saviour confirms this Interpretation, when he saith in *St. Luke's Gospel*, *'Tis easier for Heaven and Earth to pass away; than that one Tittle of the Law should not be fulfilled.* The Holy Scripture is full of such Kind of Expressions, but I would rather stick to the Answers which I have already given to the former Text, and say, that the Heavens and the Earth shall pass away, not in regard of their Substance, but only in regard of their Qualities and Accidents that belong to them.

In *St. Peter's Expressions*, I find a double Comparison or Allusion; the one relates to the Tents that are pulled down, when the Pieces are taken asunder. This Comparison is very proper; for this World is like a great Tabernacle, a glorious Pavillion. God shall pull off the Coverings, he shall cut the Cords, and separate every Piece. But he will one Day raise it up again, gather every Piece, and make it a royal Tabernacle, full of Splendour and Glory.

The other Comparison is borrowed from Goldsmiths, who cast the Gold and Metals into Pots, and then melt them in the Fire. Now as they destroy not, by this Means, the Gold and the Silver, but they cleanse them from the Dross and Froth, cause them to appear in all their Brightness and Beauty, and give them a new Shape and Form: So the Fire of the last Judgment shall not consume the Heavens and the Earth, but shall only give them a new Form and Beauty.

The strongest Objection, in my Opinion, is occasioned by the Words of *St. Peter*, *The Earth and the Works that are therein shall be burnt*: But I answer to

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this, that there is a great Difference between burning and being totally consumed and abolished. If it wer in the Power of a Man, whose House is consumed to the Ground, to raise it up again from its Ruins, and to make it more beautiful and glorious than before, by his Word alone, he would never seek for other Materials. Now shall I say again, that what is impossible with Men, is possible with God. He hath already created the World by his Word, and he is able to restore it again by the same Word. Art hath found a Means to make beautiful Vessels of melted Ashes, and shall not God's Hand, unto which all the Skill of Art, and the Strength of Nature cannot be compared, be able to gather up the Ashes of this Earth, and to make of it a Body full of Glory and Light ?

From hence you may perceive, how we are to understand, that there shall be new Heavens and a new Earth; they shall not be new in regard of their Substance and Matter, which shall have been from the Beginning of the World; but they shall be new in regard of those noble Qualities which God shall give them. When a debauch'd Fellow leaves his wicked Life, and applies himself to the Practice of Piety and Virtue, we commonly say, that he is not the same, but that he is become another Man. Besides, when a Man hath cast off his old Rags, and put on a magnificent Garment, we are wont to say, that he is another Man. We shall have much more Cause to declare, that the Heavens and the Earth shall be new, when God shall have renewed them. In short, he shall enrich the World with so many wonderful Beauties, he shall fill it full of so much Glory and Excellency, he shall cause it to be so perfect, that we shall have just Reason to look upon it, as upon a new World, and to say with the Apostle, *The old Things are passed away, behold all Things are become new.* I would not have you think, *Christians*, that this Opinion is grounded only upon human Reason: 'Tis drawn from the Words of *St. Paul*, who speaking of the earthly and insensible  
Creatures,

Creatures, as may appear by his Design; he saith not only *that they are subject to Vanity, not willingly, but because of him who hath subjected them*; he understands Man, who by his Sin and Rebellion hath spoiled the World, and corrupted Nature; but he adds immediately after, *That they hope to be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, to be in the glorious Liberty of the Children of God*; afterwards he saith, *For we know that the whole Creation groaneth and travaileth in Pain together until now*; and before he saith, *That the earnest Expectation of the Creature, waiting for the Manifestation of the Son of God*. In which Words, pray take Notice, that St. Paul saith not that these Creatures shall be abolished and totally destroyed, but only that they shall be delivered from Vanity, and from the Bondage of Corruption, unto which the Sin of Man hath made them subject; and that this blessed Deliverance shall be brought to pass at the Day of the Redemption of our Bodies, that is to say, at that Day when God shall redeem our Bodies from their Graves, and raise them up to the highest Glory and Happiness, which hath been prepared for us from the Creation of the World.

Then shall happen that which is wont to be seen at the Marriage of a great King, or at a Coronation, or a Triumph. For not only the Prince and his Spouse, and all their Court, appear in their richest and most glorious Attire, and loaden with their most precious Jewels, and the usual Pomp of Triumphs was as extraordinary and glorious as could be contriv'd; but on such Occasions, the Prince's Palace is adorned with the richest, with the most magnificent and rarest Ornaments; and the Town where this Solemnity is kept, shews forth some Signs of the publick Rejoycing. Many Places are beautiful with several Rarities, Theatres are erected and triumphal Arches, the Streets are covered with Flowers and Tapistry, Fires are kindled, and Torches are lighted; and there is no Corner but shews some Expressions of the publick



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Joy. Thus when our Lord Jesus Christ shall come down from the Clouds of Heaven, upon a Chariot of Triumph, when he shall come to consummate his Marriage with, and to crown his Spouse, he shall not only appear in his greatest Glory, and most divine Pomp, but the Church also his Spouse shall be cloathed with a Garment brighter than the Sun, and crowned with an immortal Glory. All the blessed Saints shall appear in their Attire of Joy, having Palms in their Hands and Crowns upon their Heads, and the Companies of Holy Angels shall sing round about. At that Time Paradise, which shall be his Palace and Bride-Chamber, shall be adorned and enriched with all the Light and Glory which I have already essayed to describe to you. The whole World also, and every Part of it, shall partake of this great Glory, and celestial Pomp. The richest Coronations, the most magnificent Triumphs, the most stately Nuptials are gone in a few Hours: Therefore the Fires of Joy are soon put out, the Hangings of the Streets are taken down, and the Arches and Pageants disappear, and the City is to be seen in its wonted Dress. But as this Glory and Joy of the Church shall never end; therefore the World shall for ever and ever bear the Signs of it. The Ornaments, which it shall receive in this joyful Day, shall never be taken away, and the celestial Fires of Gladness shall never go out.

Altho' tis my Opinion, that the World shall never be totally destroyed, but that it shall become more beautiful and glorious than before, I shall not undertake to give you a Description of its several Parts, nor to tell you how it shall be employed. For Example, I shall not determine whether we are to understand our Saviour's Words in the Gospel, literally, *That the Sun shall become Dark, and the Moon shall not give its Light, and that the Stars shall fall from Heaven*; or whether these heavenly Bodies shall still continue; whether they shall be decked with a new Light and Glory, and to what Purpose they shall serve. For  
then



then we shall be enlightned with a greater Light than that of all the heavenly Bodies. I shall only propose two Things: *First*, That as in the human Bodies there are some Members which at present are useful, but then they shall be only for Ornament and Beauty: Likewise, in the great World, there are many needful Things which shall be then of no Use; nevertheless they shall be preserv'd for the Beauty and Perfection of the World. *Secondly*, That as Man, the little World, shall then be more beautiful and perfect than when God first created him; likewise, this great World shall receive more Beauty, more Ornaments and Perfection, than when God drew it out of its first *Chaos*. As much Difference as there is between the second *Adam* and the first, between the heavenly Paradise and the earthly; so much there shall be between the first and the second World. So that we shall have good Cause to say of this great Palace, which is to be destroyed, and reared up again by the mighty Hand of God as the holy Prophet said of *Solomon's Temple*, which we have already applied to our glorified Bodies, *The Glory of this second House, shall be greater than the Glory of the first.*

Some enquire whether we shall know one another in this State of eternal Glory and Happiness? I mean, whether the Subject shall know his Prince and King? Whether the Sheep shall know their Pastor, and the Pastor his Sheep? Whether the Father shall know his Son, the Son the Father, the Husband his Wife, and the Wife her Husband, and so forth.

Tho' this Question is of the Number of such as are more curious, than needful to be known; nevertheless, an Answer seems to carry with it some kind of Comfort and Satisfaction. I should judge that this Treatise would not be perfect, if I did not say something to this noble Subject; but what I shall say, shall be with the same Moderation and Reservedness, as I have expressed in answering to the former Questions. For altho' what I shall speak, seems to me very plain  
and

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and without Difficulty, others may have a different Opinion, without any Prejudice to their Salvation. However, I may affirm for an infallible Truth, that the Glory of Heaven, as well as Grace, shall bring Nature to Perfection, but shall not destroy it. It shall add to it other Excellencies, but shall not take away those that it hath already. It shall not abolish any of the Faculties, but it shall beautify and enrich them with new Ornaments. Therefore consequently, it shall not take away our Memory, which is one of the rarest Gifts and Abilities of the reasonable Soul.

I confess that 'tis said, *That the former Things shall be remembred no more, and that they shall come no more into our Mind.* But this is to be understood of the Evils and Calamities of this present Life: And we are not to understand the Words so, that we shall totally forget all the former Evils and Miseries, and shall not remember to have suffered them; St. *John* saith the contrary when he represents the Angel opening the fifth Seal, that he saw under the golden Altar, which was before the Throne of God, the Souls of them who had been martyr'd for the Word of God, and for the Testimony of the Truth, crying out with a loud Voice, *How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and revenge our Blood upon the Inhabitants of the Earth?* I confess, these Words may be understood in a figurative Sense, as when God saith to *Cain*, *The Voice of thy Brother's Blood cries from the Earth unto me*; and as St. *Paul* saith, *That the Blood of Jesus Christ speaks better Things, than the Blood of Abel.* However from hence we may conclude, that the Remembrance of the Calamities and Persecutions that we have endured in this Life, is not inconsistent with Happiness. This Remembrance is so far from prejudicing our Felicity, that, on the contrary, it shall increase and enlarge it, and cause us to relish it the more. When the Prophet saith, *That the former Things shall be remembred no more, and they shall never come to Mind*; he understands that the former Evils shall never be felt, and that we shall be

be for ever sheltered from all Misery and Misfortunes.

I cannot express this by a nobler and more proper Example, than that of *Joseph*, when he went out of Prison to take the Government of *Egypt*, and had strengthened himself, by a rich Alliance in Marriage, he named his eldest Son *Manasseh*, which signifies, *Forgetfulness, or forgetful*; for he said, *God hath made me forget all my Labour, and my Father's House*. Altho' this holy Man had not altogether forgotten those Things, for he knew afterwards his Brethren, and told them of the Mischief which they had intended against him, and which God had turned to Good: But he spoke in this Manner, because God had changed his Misery and Imprisonment into Glory and Honour. In this Sense we are to understand these Words, *The former things shall be remembered no more*; because instead of the Evils and Miseries which we endure here below, we shall enter into an eternal Glory and Happiness. The Prophet expounds himself sufficiently in the next Words; for when he had said, *The former Things shall not be remembered, nor come into Mind*, he adds immediately after, *Be ye glad and rejoyce in that which I create*. The Holy Ghost confirms us in this Interpretation in another Place, in these Words, *All Tears shall be wiped off from our Eyes, there shall be no more Sorrow, nor Crying, nor Pain, but eternal Joy and Gladness shall be upon our Heads*.

Since God intends not to destroy those Gifts and Abilities which he had bestowed upon us in this Life, much less shall he abolish our Knowledge, which is one of the brightest Beams of Glory. This Knowledge shall be so far from diminishing or decaying, that it shall then increase more and more, until it comes to the highest Perfection. As the Air loseth nothing of its Twilight at break of Day, when the Sun riseth upon our Heads, but rather loseth all Obscurity and Darkness, which the Presence of the Sun draws away, until it be perfectly enlightned; likewise, our Understanding shall lose nothing of that Light and Perfection,



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fection, which it receives now from the breaking of the Day of God's Grace. But as the Sun of Righteousness riseth upon it more and more in Joy and Salvation, it shall perfectly lose all Darknes and Ignorance by Degrees, until it be fully enlighten'd. From hence we may probably conclude, that we shall know all the Persons of Heaven, whom we have known here below on Earth. For if the Glorified shall remember the Wicked, who have tormented them, they must needs remember all Believers who have bestowed upon them their Alms, and done them Good. If it were otherwise, the Apostle St. Paul would not tell the *Corinthians*; *We are your Glory, as also you are ours at the Day of the Lord Jesus*; And he would not write thus to the *Thessalonians*; *what is our Hope, our Joy, and our Crown of Glory? Is it not you before the Lord Jesus Christ at his Coming? Verily you are our Glory and our Joy*. Now, if in the State of Glory, St. Paul should not know the *Corinthians* and *Thessalonians*, unto whom he had preached the Gospel, how shall they be his Joy, his Glory, and his Crown at the Coming of the Lord Jesus? This Reason seems to me as clear as the Sun. Nevertheless, I cannot affirm, that in Heaven we shall know again them whom we have known upon Earth by the Features of their Countenance, for there shall be a wonderful Alteration. The Faces of all the Saints shall be beautiful, so perfect, and full of Light and Glory, that the most knowing shall not be able to judge them to be the same whom we have seen upon Earth. Some therefore fancy, that we shall know one another by the Assistance of our Discourse; but our Voice shall then be changed as well as our Countenance, and 'tis doubtful whether we shall discourse of the former Things which happened on Earth; for our chief Employment shall be to behold God's Face, and to sing forth his Praises. I had rather therefore affirm, that we shall know one another by an infused Knowledge, by which we shall know all Things which are possible to be known, and by the Light of that Glory with  
which



which God shall fill our Souls. In short, this Knowledge shall proceed from no other Principle, than that of all the Knowledges with which we shall be crown'd in that State of Glory and Perfection.

I am therefore more than fully persuaded, that we shall know in Heaven our Parents and our Friends, and generally all the Persons whom we have known here below: But we shall also perfectly know them whom we never knew in the World, and never saw with the Eyes of the Flesh. We shall know the holy and blessed Virgin *Mary*, the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Evangelists, the Confessors, the Martyrs, and generally, without Exception, all the Saints, who shall be crowned with Glory and Joy in Heaven. There is no Body can question, but that in the celestial Paradise, we shall have more Knowledge and Understanding, than ever *Adam* had in the earthly. Now when God caused a deep Sleep to fall upon him, when he took one of his Ribs, and formed therewith a Woman, he had seen none of this done; nevertheless, when his Eyes were open, he knew her, therefore he declared his Judgment in this manner, *This is Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Flesh*. And shall not we, when God shall rouse us up from the deep Sleep of Death with the Sound of the last Trumpet, know the Spouse of the Son of God, which he hath drawn out of his Side, and molded with his own precious Blood? *St. Peter*, when he was enlighten'd by a Beam of our Saviour's Glory in his Transfiguration, knew *Moses* and *Elias* whom he had never seen before. And shall not we know all the Children of God upon Mount *Sion*, when we shall be transfigured ourselves, and that we shall all shine as the heavenly Light, whereof that of Mount *Tabor* was but an imperfect Shadow and Representation? But tho' we shall know in Heaven all the Persons whom we have known on Earth, we shall look upon them in another Manner, and love them with another Affection, for all that we have of the animal and earthly Life shall be totally abolished; and as our Knowledge

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Knowledge shall be clear and certain, our Love shall be pure and heavenly. I am not able to express this better than *St. Paul* doth, in these Words, *Although I have known Christ according to the Flesh, nevertheless, I know him no more according to the Flesh.* Christians, consider well these Expressions, they will be able to remove all Difficulty and Doubts out of your Minds. We are fully persuaded, that all the Inhabitants of Heaven shall know very well our Lord Jesus Christ: For how can it be otherwise, but that we must know this glorious Monarch of Men and of Angels, whose sacred Countenance shall shine as the Sun, and who shall sit upon his magnificent Throne, about which Legions of *Seraphims* fly, and who shall be there adorned for ever, by all the Church of Glory? Nevertheless, *St. Paul* saith, *That although he hath known Jesus Christ according to the Flesh;* that is to say, according to the Manner of this low and earthly Life, when he lived here on Earth; at present he did not know him in the same Manner, he did not consider him otherwise, but as he is at present invested with an unspeakable Glory and Splendor. In the same Manner, altho' we shall know all them whom we have known on Earth, we shall no more know them according to the Flesh, that is to say, according to this animal and sensual Life, our Love shall have nothing of earthly or carnal, but it shall be altogether spiritual and heavenly.

I beseech you, Christians, consider well what *St. Mat.* tells us in *Cb. xxii.* The *Sadducees*, who say that there is no Resurrection, came to Christ to intangle him with this difficult Question, *Master, Moses said, If a Man die having no Children, his Brother shall marry his Wife, and raise up Seed unto his Brother. Now there were with us seven Brethren; and the first when he had married a Wife deceased, and having no Issue, left his Wife unto his Brethren; likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh; and last of all the Woman died also; therefore, in the Resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven; for they all had her?* Our Saviour answers

answers not that this Woman shall belong to none of those Husbands, because they shall not know her, nor distinguish her from other Women; but he replies to them, *you do err, not knowing the Scripture, nor the Power of God; for in the Resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in Marriage, but are as the Angels of God in Heaven.* From hence we may conclude, that altho' in Heaven we shall know one another, we shall have nothing of that carnal Love, which we have at present, and which causeth us to put so much Difference between one Person and another. A Father may know his Children, but his Love shall not be grounded upon Considerations of Flesh and Blood; he shall love them only, because they are amongst the Children of God, and the Heirs of the Kingdom, and because he shall appear in the Image of the Heavenly Father, cloathed with his Light, and crowned with his immortal Glory. Finally, We shall love no Body but in God, and for his Sake, as they shall be in God and God in them. In this manner it shall not be possible to love them more or less, Charity, or Love, the Queen of Virtues, shall then sit upon its Throne, and attain to the highest Degree and Perfection.

If you think seriously upon this, *Christians*, you shall easily find Arguments to answer the vain Objections of such as say, That if we come to the Knowledge of one another in Heaven, that will be able to disturb our Satisfaction. For as 'tis a Comfort and Joy to meet there with our Parents and Friends; in like manner it will be a Trouble and Affliction, not to find there all such whom we have formerly loved. We may form and retort the same Objection with more Reason, against those who believe that we shall not know one another in Heaven. For we may say also, that not knowing the Persons, we shall not know whether our Parents or our Friends are there; and this is likely to disturb and trouble the Quiet and Satisfaction



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Satisfaction of our Minds. But to argue in this gross Manner, is to confound Heaven with the Earth.

Grief and Displeasure can never be admitted in a Paradise of Joy and perfect Happiness. In this glorious Condition, our Knowledge shall be so clear, our Charity so pure, our Love to God so fervent, that as we shall love all Things which God shall love, and where his Image shall appear; so that it shall not be possible for us to love them whom God shall hate, them who shall bear the Marks and Characters of the Devil.

When *David* was yet here on Earth, he said unto God, *Lord, do I not hate them that hate thee? I hate them with a perfect Hatred, they have been to me as mine Enemies*, Ps. xxxix. In the same manner we shall rather speak in Heaven, in the State of Perfection, when God shall be in us All in All, and we shall be all in God. Some there are that enquire what kind of Language we shall speak in Heaven? Some reply, that we shall speak the Language of Angels, grounding their Opinion upon what *St. Paul* says to the *Corinthians*, *Though I speak with the Tongues of Men and of Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal*.

But this is a fantastical Opinion; for as the Angels are pure Spirits, they can have no Tongue, nor proper Language. I confess, in some holy Apparitions, Angels have spoken to Men, but it was by moving the Tongues of their borrowed Bodies, or by employing some other corporal Organ. Then they spoke in the Language of those to whom they were sent, and had no particular or proper Dialect. But if Angels did speak, their Language would excel as much that of Men, as the angelical Nature excels the humane. By the Tongues of Angels therefore our Apostle understands an excellent Tongue, better than that of Men.

Others fancy, that in Heaven we shall speak no other Language but the *Hebrew*, because, say they, that 'tis the



the Tongue which God hath sanctified from the Beginning of the World; in which he spoke to the Patriarchs and holy Prophets, in which he proclaimed his Law upon Mount *Sinai*, in the Audience of all the People of *Israel*, and in which he hath recorded his sacred Law with his own Finger. They say, that 'tis the Language which *Adam* spoke in the earthly Paradise, in the State of Innocency, and which all the Inhabitants of the World made use of before God sent among them a Division of Tongues. And we may also affirm, that 'twas the Language used by our Saviour while he was on Earth. For the *Syriack*, which he commonly spoke as the rest of the *Jews*, is a Dialect of the *Hebrew*, or a Kind of corrupted *Hebrew*. Others are yet of Opinion, that as then we shall attain to all the Knowledge and Sciences, we shall not be ignorant of any Kind of Languages, but that we shall speak them all in a most perfect manner, and that with them we shall declare the wonderful Works of God, as the Apostles at the Day of *Pentecost*. As the Holy Scripture is silent upon the Matter, I shall affirm nothing.

But in general Terms, I may declare, that as God caused a Division of Tongues to punish Man's Insolence and Pride, and as the different Languages of People, is an Effect of their Sin, 'tis more certain, that this Confusion and Difference shall be altogether taken away, and that nothing shall be said in Heaven, but shall be very well understood by all the glorified Saints. I may add, moreover, that in case we should speak so well all manner of Languages, which have been in the World, 'tis nevertheless very likely that we shall all speak but one Language, that we may all praise God with the same Voice. But whether this shall be the holy Language, or another more perfect and majestic, which God shall sanctify for this Purpose, we cannot know until God of his infinite Mercy shall have raised us to this State of Glory and perfect Happiness. From what we have already said, Christians; you may easily understand, that our Happiness hath three Steps or Degrees; the first is attainable in this Life, the second at the Egress of the Soul out of the Body, the third is at the great Day of our glorious Resurrection. For already in this Life, God bestows upon us the First-Fruits of his Glory, and the Fore-Tastes of his Paradise. The Spirit of God, and of his Glory, rests at present upon us, which fills us full of an unspeakable glorious Joy, and with the Peace of God, which passeth all Understanding. When our Souls depart out of this wretched and infirm Body, God gathers them up into the Bundle of Life he introduceth them into the blessed Company of the Angels and glorified Spirits, and admits them to the Contemplation of his Face, which is Fulness of Joy. But in this Day of Triumph, when Christ shall come down from Heaven to judge the quick and the dead, he will advance us both in Soul and Body to the highest Glory and Happiness whereof we are capable. For this

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Reason the Name of Glory is ascribed to this high Degree of Happiness, which is promised to us at the blessed Appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ in the viiith Chap. to the Romans where the Apostle saith, *That the Creature was made subject to Vanity, not willingly, but by Reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the Creature itself shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God.* And in the iiid. Chap. to the Coloss. he saith, *you are dead, and your Life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ who is your Life shall appear, you shall appear also with him in Glory.* Therefore this glorious Appearing is styled, A Blessed Hope, that is to say, the Fulfillings and Accomplishment of all that we expect or hope for; as in that iid. Chap. to Tit. St. Paul saith, *We expect the Blessed Hope, the appearing of the Glory of our great God, who is the Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Then shall be the Consummation of the Glory, Head, Members; for then the Son of God shall cause the damned to feel that Almighty Power which he possesseth in Heaven and Earth, and in the Depths. He shall discover himself to the Faithful, in his greatest Glory and most Divine Splendor. Therefore this glorious Day of his Descent from Heaven, with the Angels of his Power, is mentioned as the first Day of his *Manifestation*, of his *Appearing*, and of his *Kingdom*. For this Cause, when the Holy Ghost speaks of this Day, he styles it, *The Day of our Lord Jesus Christ*, or *the Day of our Lord Jesus*, as also *the Day of the Lord*, and *the Day of God*. As it shall be the Day of the Lord Jesus, it shall also be our Day. Therefore St. Paul calls it, *The Day of our Redemption*, because that in this Day, our Lord shall redeem our Bodies out of their Graves, and shall bestow upon both our Souls and Bodies, *Eph. iv.* all the Fruits of the Redemption, which he hath purchased for us with his Blood, *Rom. viii.* and shall raise us up to the highest Glory and most perfect Happiness, *Heb. ix.* 'Tis the happy Day of Consummation of our Marriage with the Divine Lamb. 'Tis the Day of our Joy and Triumph with the glorified Men and Angels. 'Tis the Day of our Coronation, and of our Entrance into our Kingdom, when the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords shall crown us with his own Hand, and put us in possession of an Empire prepared for us in the Beginning of the World. In a Word, 'tis the Day when we shall come to the Lord Jesus, and be with him, as he is with the Father, that we may be all in one.

Because of the glorious and wonderful things that shall come to pass on this Day, 'tis named, *The great Day*; St. Jude calls it thus, when he speaks of the revolted Angels, he saith, *That God hath reserved them in everlasting Chains under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day.* In this manner many understand the Words of John when he describes the foul Spirits, and likens them to Frogs that he saw coming out of the Dragon's Mouth, and

and of the Beast, and out of the Mouth of the false Prophet, and faith, they are the Spirits of the Devil working Miracles, which God sent forth unto the Kings of the Earth, and of the whole World, to gather them to the Battel of that great Day of God Almighty, Rev. xvi.

Lastly, This glorious Day is not only called the Day of Judgment, the Day of the Lord, the Day of our Redemption, and the great Day, but oft-times, without any Addition, is styl'd the Day, and that Day; as Hebrews x. Let us consider one another to provoke unto Love and good Works; not forsaking the assembling ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the Day approaching. In the Epistle to the Thessalonians, you are not in Darkness, that That Day should surprize you. Thus in the i<sup>id</sup> Ep. to Timothy and 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter St. Paul saith, I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that Day. And when he remembers the good and charitable Deeds of Onesiphorus, he prays for him in this Manner, The Lord grant unto him, that he may find Mercy of the Lord in that Day; and in the iv<sup>th</sup> Chapter speaking of himself, he saith, I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that Day.

'Tis so styled, because of its Excellency, 'tis the Day of Days, the End of all the Seasons, the Consummation of all Ages and Times; after this there shall be no more Alteration of Days, Months, and Years. Therefore an Angel is represented in the Revel. lifting up his Hand to Heaven, swearing by the living God, who hath created Heaven and all things therein, the Earth and all things in it, and the Sea, and the things that are therein: That there shall be no more Time. For instead of this unconstant Time which flies away without leaving any Sign of its being, an everlasting Eternity shall succeed, an Eternity always the same, always blessed with Happiness, always Glorious and Joyful. This divine and magnificent Day shall begin at the End of other Days, but shall never draw to an End. Therefore St. Peter, in these Words, calls it an eternal Day or Eternity, 2 Pet. iii. Glory be to the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, both now and for ever, Amen. And in Expectation of this Day of Days, all Creatures are groaning and travelling in Pain until now; but especially Believers, who have the First-Fruits of the Spirit, groan in themselves, desiring with an earnest and holy desire to see the breaking of the great and glorious Day. 'Tis the End of all the Prophecies, and the Accomplishment of all God's gracious Promises, to his People in all Ages of the World; 'tis the End and reward of our spiritual Calling, and fulfilling of all our Desires and Expectations, and Crowning of all our Labours, and the highest Step of that Glory and Happiness, unto which we pretend.



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Reason the Name of Glory is ascribed to this high Degree of Happiness, which is promised to us at the blessed Appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ in the viiith Chap. to the Romans where the Apostle saith, *That the Creature was made subject to Vanity, not willingly, but by Reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; because the Creature itself shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God.* And in the iiid. Chap. to the Coloss. he saith, *you are dead, and your Life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ who is your Life shall appear, you shall appear also with him in Glory.* Therefore this glorious Appearing is styled, *A Blessed Hope*, that is to say, the Fulfillings and Accomplishment of all that we expect or hope for; as in that iid. Chap. to Tit. St. Paul saith, *We expect the Blessed Hope, the appearing of the Glory of our great God, who is the Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Then shall be the Consummation of the Glory, Head, Members; for then the Son of God shall cause the damned to feel that Almighty Power which he possesseth in Heaven and Earth, and in the Depths. He shall discover himself to the Faithful, in his greatest Glory and most Divine Splendor. Therefore this glorious Day of his Descent from Heaven, with the Angels of his Power, is mentioned as the first Day of his *Manifestation*, of his *Appearing*, and of his *Kingdom*. For this Cause, when the Holy Ghost speaks of this Day, he styles it, *The Day of our Lord Jesus Christ*, or *the Day of our Lord Jesus*, as also *the Day of the Lord*, and *the Day of God*. As it shall be the Day of the Lord Jesus, it shall also be our Day. Therefore St. Paul calls it, *The Day of our Redemption*, because that in this Day, our Lord shall redeem our Bodies out of their Graves, and shall bestow upon both our Souls and Bodies, *Eph. iv.* all the Fruits of the Redemption, which he hath purchased for us with his Blood, *Rom. viii.* and shall raise us up to the highest Glory and most perfect Happiness, *Heb. ix.* 'Tis the happy Day of Consummation of our Marriage with the Divine Lamb. 'Tis the Day of our Joy and Triumph with the glorified Men and Angels. 'Tis the Day of our Coronation, and of our Entrance into our Kingdom, when the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords shall crown us with his own Hand, and put us in possession of an Empire prepared for us in the Beginning of the World. In a Word, 'tis the Day when we shall come to the Lord Jesus, and be with him, as he is with the Father, that we may be all in one.

Because of the glorious and wonderful things that shall come to pass on this Day, 'tis named, *The great Day*; St. Jude calls it thus, when he speaks of the revolted Angels, he saith, *That God hath reserved them in everlasting Chains under Darknes, unto the Judgment of the great Day.* In this manner many understand the Words of John when he describes the foul Spirits, and likens them to Frogs that he saw coming out of the Dragon's Mouth, and



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You devout Souls, that delight in the Contemplation of celestial Things, I pray consider with me, the Accomplishment and the Perfection of three Kinds of Works, which have been succeeded by their several Rests. The first was that of the Creation of the World; for in six Days God created the Heaven and the Earth, and all Things in them, and when he had finished his Works, and found that they were good and perfect, he rested the seventh Day, *Gen. i. and ii.* Therefore he blessed and sanctified it. The second great Work was that of Redemption, for when our Saviour had fulfilled all the Prophecies which mentioned him; when he had caused the Meaning of all the ancient Types and Figures to appear in his Person and Sufferings; when he had fully satisfied the Justice of God, and purchased for us with his Blood an eternal Redemption, he cried out, *All is finished*, John xix. and he bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghost. After this, Christ had nothing more to do, nor suffer, but he is gone into Heaven to rest from all his Works, *Rev. v.* and to take Possession of all Power, Riches, Wisdom, Strength, Honour, Glory, and Praise. The third Work is that of our Glorification, when we shall see new Heavens appear, and a new Earth, when our Bodies shall be cloathed with Incorruption and Immortality, and united again to our Souls; and when in both Soul and Body we shall attain to the highest Glory, and most perfect Happiness; then he that sits upon the Throne of Eternity shall say with a loud Voice, *Rev. xxi. All is finished.*

Afterwards the Sabbath of Sabbaths shall succeed that eternal Rest, and that Peace which shall never be interrupted by any Unhappiness. We may say, that the first Rest is that of God the Father, the second belongs to the Son, the third is the Rest of the Holy Ghost, that shall have then gathered all the Saints together, reared up the House of God to the Roof, and perfectly enlighten'd and sanctified the Catholick Church, from whence shall proceed its eternal Glory and Happiness: Or rather, we may say, that this last rest is the Rest of all the three Persons of the most holy and glorious Trinity, for then they shall rest from all Manner of Works for ever and ever, and we in the Bosom of their Glory, we shall also enjoy an everlasting Rest. When the Works of Creation were finished, the Works of Redemption were next expected, and after the Works of Redemption, we hope for the Works of our final Glorification. But when God shall have brought us all into his glorious Rest, and that he shall have declared for the third time from Heaven, *all is finished*: We shall then expect nothing, neither from God's Justice, nor from his Mercy, for all God's Enemies shall be then destroyed, and it shall not be possible to add any Thing to the Infamy of their Punishments, nor to the Violence of their Torments. There shall be no more Tears to be wiped, no more Evils to be feared, nor Advantages to be expected, nor Crowns to receive, for then all the Children of God shall be perfectly glorified. They shall enjoy

joy God himself, who shall be their Inheritance, for ever, and the Bottomless Fountain of all their Delights, so that it shall not be possible to add any Thing to their infinite Glory; nor to their eternal Happines. God shall then, if I may so speak, take away all Means of expressing any greater Liberality and Bounty.

*Abraham* leaped for Joy when he saw the Birth-day and Humiliation of the Son of God; how should we rejoyce and be transported out of ourselves, when we think upon this glorious Day of the appearing of our great God and Saviour? When with the Eye of Faith we behold him sitting upon the Clouds of Heaven, coming to put a Period to Sin and Death, to shut up the Devil and his Angels in the bottomless Pit of Hell, to deliver his Church from all Evils, Enemies, and Dangers, and to promote it to the highest Felicity, and to an everlasting Glory?

After this believing Souls, I must draw the Curtain and suffer my Pen to fall from my Hand, for mine Eyes dazzle at the Sight of so shining a Light, and my Soul is surprized at the Consideration of so much Glory and so perfect an Happines.

Altho' I have lengthen'd this Treatise more than I at first propos'd to myself, I must needs confess, that whatsoever I have said upon so rich and glorious a Subject, falls far short of the Truth. But I am persuaded, that there will be here enough, for pious and devout Souls who seek not for the Ornament of Language, nor for the Flourishes of Rhetorick, but for the true and solid Comforts of God's holy Word. You Christian and believing Souls, for whose Sake I have undertaken this Work, I intreat you for the Glory of God, and for your own Salvation, to preserve in your Minds the Ideas of these Things that I have now spoken of. Imprint them in your Memories, grave them upon your Hearts with the Point of a Diamond, and especially take Delight in reducing them to Practice, and you shall assuredly find both Joy and Comfort. Think often upon Death, let it be the most familiar, and most pleasant Subject of your Discourse, expect it at every Moment, and lead such a Life as if Death were already upon your Lips. Fear not the many Troubles of this humane Life; doubt not but that God hath determined the Time and Manner of your going out of the World, and that every Kind of Death of the Children of God is precious in his Sight. Since you are to live yet but a short Time upon Earth, settle not your Hearts, but possess your Riches and Advantages, as not possessing them, remembering, that the fashion of the World passeth away. Since 'tis Sin alone that makes Death appear so terrible to us, hate all Manner of Vice, and study the Practice of Piety.

And in regard there is no Body at the Hour of Death but wisheth that he had lived well; think upon your latter End, and you shall never be able to sin. If your Mind is disturbed with the Consideration of those Things which shall happen after your



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Decease, learn to rest upon the wise Providence of God, that sees into the Depths of Eternity, that provides for all Things, and that draws Light out of the greatest Darkness. Are you cast upon a Bed of Sickness and Disease, open the Eye of Faith, and you shall see yourselves encompassed about with holy Angels, and in the Arms of God himself: Dread not the Violence of Pain, for God shall never forsake you in your Grief, he shall never suffer you to be afflicted above what you are able to endure. Fantasie him not as a dreadful and merciless Judge, but look upon him as a gracious and loving Father, who desires not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should repent and live. If Death appears to you with a frightful Countenance, if it fill you full of Terrors, cast your Eyes by Faith upon the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall see there all the Weapons and Armour of this Death broken in Pieces. You shall see there a divine and precious Blood running down, which hath satisfied for all our Sins, and marked unto you the Way of God's eternal Sanctuary. Let not the Grave that is digging for you terrify you, since the King of Kings has been laid there before you, and filled it with his most divine Odours. Let Death seem to you never so dreadful, remember that our Saviour hath overcome it by his Resurrection. Fear not therefore to encounter it, for our great God and Saviour shall make you partake of his Victory. And that you might cause in your Souls an earnest longing to go to Heaven, looking upon Jesus Christ there who prepares a Place for you, and desires that you should be eternally with him, to behold his Joy and Glory. Fear not the Separation of the Soul from the Body, since Death, which shall separate you from yourselves, is not able to separate you from the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, the Soul of our Souls, the Seal of the Promises of God, and the earnest of our future Inheritance. Instead of looking behind us, and longing for these perishing Advantages, and for Honours that can only dazle the Eye; consider that Death shall wipe away all Tears, remove all your Grief, and raise you above all the Stores of the World, above all the Miseries and Troubles that cover the Face of the Earth. That you may be able to follow this Death more chearfully, remember that it draws you out of a Place all polluted with Sin, and infected with Impiety, to transport you into a new Heaven adorned with Righteousness and Holiness, and perfumed with the Prayers, Praise and Thanksgivings of the glorified Saints: Remember that it frees you from all remains of Corruption, and gives Death's Wound to all your Lusts. Mind not so much as the false Appearance of Death; for to the wicked 'tis as it were the Suburbs of Hell, the Jaws of the bottomless Pit, and the beginning of their endless Torments; but to you, Believers, 'tis the Gate of Heaven, and Entrance into Paradise, and a Passage to a most happy Life. Learn to relish now the Joys wherewith your



your Souls shall be for ever satisfied, when God shall crown you with his Glory, and make you drink of the Rivers of his Pleasure. Since your Soul is going to put on a Garment of an immortal Colour, and to dwell for ever in the Palace which God hath built with his Almighty Hand, cast off willingly this wretched, infirm and corruptible Body.

Depart willingly out of this Earthly Tabernacle, which turns of itself to Dust. Consider well that tho' it fall by Death, it shall rise again at the Resurrection, and that when it shall have been the dwelling and the Food of Worms, it shall at last become the Temple of God, and the Tabernacle of his Glory. Finally, O religious Souls, shut your Eyes to the World, and to all the Vanities that the World adores, and aspire to the real Advantages which God hath prepared for you before the Creation of the World, and in which you shall joy when the World shall be no more. Let your precious Faith, and your blessed Hope, enter into Eternity itself, to behold that extraordinary Happiness and Glory which God shall accomplish when he shall bring us both in Soul and Body into this celestial Paradise, to see his Face, in which is Fulness of Joy.

In regard this perfect Happiness, and infinite Glory, which never entered into the Heart and Thoughts of Man, shall never be perfectly accomplished, but at that Day when Jesus Christ shall appear from Heaven, to be glorified in his Saints, and to become wonderful in all Believers; think always upon this glorious Day, the End of all our Wishes, the fulfilling of all our Hopes, and the Perfections of all those Designs which God hath purposed in himself from all Eternity.

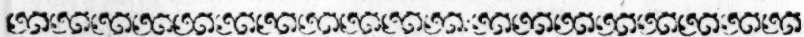
You *devout Souls*, that are grieved to see the World prosper, and *Satan's* Empire flourish; to see God's Children subject to all the Darts of Death, take good Courage and rejoice with an holy Joy; for shortly all the Enemies of God, and of your Salvation shall be punish'd with an everlasting Punishment, as from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power. Shortly, the Devil, his Angels, his Agents and Slaves shall be bound up in Chains of Darkness, and cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, and shut up in the bottomless Pit. Shortly, Death shall be no more, and this Church of Jesus Christ, whole Miseries and Afflictions cause you to weep, shall be clothed with unspeakable Light and Glory: It shall enter with Joy and Triumph into the heavenly *Jerusalem*, and you yourselves shall sing with all the glorified Armies of Heaven.

Since Christ shall come as a Thief in the Night, and shall surprize all the Children of the World unawares, to incline your Souls, Believers, to the Love of God, and Expectation of your merciful Lord; behave yourselves in the same Manner, as you would do if you were now at the Eve of this great Festival, as if you did spy already the breaking of this most happy Day. En-

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<sup>t</sup>ertain now the same Affections and Joy, as if you did hear the Voice of God, and the Trumpet of the Archangel, as if the Earth was already in a Flame, and as if Jesus Christ himself were coming in the Clouds of Heaven. And in regard no impure Thing shall enter into the heavenly and holy *Jerusalem*, and that without Holiness no Man shall see the Face of God; cleanse yourselves, Christians, from all Filthiness of the Flesh, and of the Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of the Lord. Forsake all manner of Vice, give yourselves over to Virtue, and to the Practice of good Works, imitate the Diligence of that faithful Servant that you may not be ashamed at the coming of your great Master. Take heed that ye be not like the wise Virgins, that slept as well as the foolish; but watch and pray that you may not enter into Temptation, for the Spirit is willing, but the Flesh is weak. Redeem the Time, for the Days are evil, and make haste to put on the Garments of Righteousness and Innocence; fill your Hearts with the holy Oyl of Faith, of Hope and Charity. Take your Lamps in your Hands, and let your Souls shine with a divine Light.

In this blessed Disposition, let us go and meet our heavenly Bridegroom, and hasten his coming by our Prayers and Groans. Let our Souls be full of Love, let them sigh for our divine Jesus, and being moved with the same Affections as *St. John*, let us say to him with an earnest Desire, *Come, Lord Jesus*; and if he answers, *for certain I come quickly*, let the Longing of our Souls encrease more and more, that we may be able to pray more fervently, and let this Cry reach up to Heaven; *Come, Lord Jesus, even, come Lord, come quickly.* Amen.



A Prayer and Meditation for a believing Soul, that rejoiceth and comforts itself in looking upon Death's Destruction, and the everlasting and blessed Life which we hope to enjoy, both in Soul and Body after the Resurrection.

**O** Great Judge of the World, Author of Life and Happiness: Thy Grace hath bestowed upon me the Seeds of Immortality, the first Fruits of Glory and the Foretaste of everlasting Delights: By Faith I have a Prospect into those Joys and Felicities of Paradise, into which my Soul shall enter at its Departure out of this wicked World, and into that Glory prepared for my Body at thy appearing. O raise my Mind to eye continually that compleat and unspeakable Felicity and Glory, promised to both Soul and Body, when thou shalt be revealed from Heaven with Flames of Fire, to take Vengeance of Unbelievers, and to glorify the Saints. Let me not be unmindful of that magnificent Throne, where thou shalt sit to judge the quick and the dead, before which the greatest Princes and Monarchs, as well as their meanest Subjects and Slaves, must appear, to hear the just Sentence of their Doom, and receive the Rewards of their Deeds. Grant that I may now rejoyce in Expectation of that happy Day, in which all the Enemies of thy Glory and our Salvation, shall

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shall be destroyed, in which Satan, his Angels, and wicked Agents and Instruments of his Kingdom shall be bound in Chains, and cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, from whence they shall never be released, in which Death shall be no more, all the living shall become immortal, and thy Church be crowned and enter in Triumph into that magnificent City, built with Gold, Pearls, and precious Stones, where thy Glory shall continue for ever to enlighten it, and accomplish our Happiness. O that I may now expect with Comfort and Joy, that blessed State, where we shall neither hunger nor thirst, but be advanced to the Condition and perfection of Angels, be clothed with Light and Glory, and being crowned with an eternal Felicity, rejoyce with the celestial Societies of Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles Confessors, and Martyrs, and with all the Princes and Monarchs, who have lived, and are departed in thy Fear and Favour, and where we shall be admitted to the Vision of God, and be changed and satisfied with his divine Likeness. O Lord! grant that I may always have this glorious and happy Day in my Thoughts, when all thy Promises shall be fulfilled, all the Works finished, and our Desires and Expectations fully accomplished. And because this Time and Day is unknown to us give us Grace to live always waiting for it, as if we were at the Eve of this eternal Sabbath, that our Lamps may be trimm'd, provided, and burn with the Oil of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and we ready and awake at thy glorious appearing, clothed with a Wedding-Garment, fit to enter with thee into eternal Blessedness. Grant us grace to desire and look for this promised Redemption, long to hear the Sound of the last Trumpet, and behold thy coming in the Clouds of Heaven. O divine Saviour! That we may ascend to meet thee and welcome thy glorious Appearance. O Lord, forgive our impatient Wishers, and hasten that Day for the Elects Sake. Come with thy powerful Angels, and the Ministers of thy heavenly Court, to execute Justice on thine Enemies, and deliver thy Servants. Come and put an End to this wicked World, infected with Sin, and subject to Corruption and Vanity, and purge the Heavens and the Earth from all Pollution. Come and take Vengeance for the innocent Blood of thy Martyrs, shed by Antichrist and his cruel Agents; bind the Devils in Chains of Darkness, and shut them up with Death for ever in the bottomless Pit. Lord Jesus, have Pity on the Cries and Sufferings of thy distressed People. Come and deliver them out of this cruel Egypt, out of this abominable Babylon, where they continue in Captivity. O merciful Lord! Is it not time that thou shouldest bring us to thy celestial Canaan? Give us to taste of the Milk and Honey of the most refined Joys and Comfort, and introduce us into thine holy Jerusalem, the City of Peace and everlasting Rest: Come therefore and wipe away the Tears, and stop the crying of thine afflicted People. Take them out of this infamous Prison, open to them the Gates of thy magnificent Palace, cloath them with Light, and perfect thy Salvation and their Happiness. We have been a long while contending with our Spiritual and temporal Enemies, in our tedious and troublesome Journey thro' the World, and at a Distance from thee; we now long to be nearer to thee, O wonderful Redeemer! who hast accomplished all thy Works, and that of our Redemption by thy Blood and Sufferings: perfect also, we beseech thee, that of our Glorification, receive us and thy Church into that compleat Felicity prepared for us from the Beginning of the World, and purchased with thy precious Blood and Sufferings. O merciful God! admit us to that State where we have nothing to fear, nothing to desire, and  
nothing



nothing to wish for, but be always employed in praising thine infinite Beauty and Mercy: Join our Voices with the Anthems of the holy Angels, that with thy Blessed Saints we may be able to say; now is come Salvation and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Christ, for Death is swallowed up in Victory, and the grand Accuser of our Brethren is shut up in the bottomless Pit, which accused them before our God Day and Night. \* And they have overcome him by the Blood of the Lamb, and have not loved their own Lives unto Death. Unto him, who hath loved and washed us from all our Sins in his Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God his Father, to him, I say, as to the Father and the Holy Ghost, be Glory, Power, and Dominion for ever. Amen.



*An Account of some remarkable Passages relating to Mr. Drelincourt, who departed this Life at Paris, the 4th of November 1669; taken out of the French Edition of his Book of Death.*

**T**O prevent false Reports spread abroad concerning the Death of our reverend Author, I thought it convenient to publish this brief and exact Narrative concerning his Person, Sickness, and Death: He was of a very strong and healthy Constitution, indefatigable in his Ministry; of such a sharp and active Spirit, and so pious for the Glory of God, that he spared not himself, either by Night or by Day, in discharging the Duty of his Function, and in Acts of Charity, being naturally of a courteous and obliging Temper. He succeeded Mr. Du Moulin, who was removed to Sedan, and was a long time the third Minister to serve that vast Congregation at Charenton: This continual and restless Employment in his Ministry, by degrees mightily impaired his Health, especially in the Declension of his Age.

In the Year 1668, the 30th of April, tho' indisposed, he adventured to accompany one of his Grand-Daughters to her Grave, assisted by one of his Sons, but could scarce return Home, being weary and in a fainting Sweat, and his Countenance changed, which alarmed his Family; but by some present Remedy, he then recovered. This Accident hindered him not from preaching the next Day at Charenton in his turn, nor from his daily Offices, wishing often he might die with his Pen in his Hand. When his Family entreated him to spare himself in his old Age, in visiting the sick and the Poor, unto whom he was very acceptable by Reason of his excellent Talents in praying, and understanding how to comfort the diseased: He told them, that he had once that Resolution, but the Importunities of his People



ple, and the Desire he had to be serviceable to them, would not suffer him to omit doing it.

In a stormy Season, at nine of the Clock at Night, he adventured to visit a departing Soul, and return'd not till after Midnight, and seem'd very glad to be able to perform it; but these continual Fatigues made him pass this Judgment upon himself, that he could not long continue, and therefore was in a constant Preparation for his Change.

This made him frequently to peruse his Book of *Consolations against Death*, praising God, who assisted him in publishing such an useful Work: He was then writing several other Excellent Treatises, which he earnestly desired to finish, with Submission to the great Wisdom of God, as he expresseth himself in a Prayer at the end of his Book call'd *charitable Visits*. Lord (saith he) *I have lived and preached a long Time; I wait for thy Salvation and Deliverance; I am not weary to serve so good a Master, and so bountiful a Lord; but oh my God! when it shall please thee to put an end to my Labours, I shall depart to a fulness of Joy into thy glorious Rest.*

This he writ the Year before his Death; the next Year he had some Intervals of perfect Health, but they were followed by two dangerous Relapses: The first was in April; Yet tho' indisposed, he forc'd himself to preach at Charenton, against the Advice of his Physicians, and he continued in the Exercise of his Function. On the 9th of May he opened the Synod of Charenton, and at the Conclusion of his Speech, he received the Applauses of his Brethren there assembled, for which he gave God Thanks for having enabled him with so much Strength; and on the 12th of Sept. 1669, being a Fast day, he preached again twice in the Court of the Temple with much Freedom and Vigour. This Interval of Health continued till the 27th of October following, when in his turn he preached at Charenton, and his Auditors found that he spoke with much Freedom, and powerfully. 'Tis remarkable that he left the Epistle of St. Peter that he was expounding before, and chose for a Text, list Psalm, 7th and 8th Verses, *Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me, and I shall be whiter than Snow.*

This last Sermon was looked upon afterwards as a Presage he had of his Death, and a Preparation for it, by desiring the Pardon of his Sins, and a cleansing from all the Pollutions of his Flesh and Spirit, thro' the infinite Mercy of God, and of the Blood of his Saviour: The whole Audience were very well satisfied with his last Performance, which they judg'd to be excellent and worthy to crown all his former religious Exercises. At his return to the City he spent the rest of the Sabbath in the Acts of Piety and Charity; and at his return Home, being desirous to enjoy the Company of all his Family, then at Paris, he supped with them, and seem'd very pleasant in Discourse; he continued well on Monday, and the next Day till the 29th of September

ber, the fatal Day in which his mortal Distemper began to attack him; from that Morning he felt an Indisposition, and had no Appetite at Dinner, yet could not forbear visiting sick Persons in his District. This good Man came home very feeble, and out of Order, with a Fever upon him: Some Time after his Speech failed him; and when Mr. Malnoe (Advocate in Parliament, his Son-in-Law) was come to visit him, he was scarce able to speak; he was persuaded to take his Rest, and suddenly fell upon his Knees, and made such an excellent Prayer, that his Family never heard from him one more fervent: He discoursed of the Frailty of human Life, of the Condition he was in, of the Church of God, and insisted earnestly upon her Deliverance; he prayed for all the Members of his Family, and in this last religious Exercise performed among his Domesticks, he omitted nothing material, prayed with Zeal and Vigour, with a clear Voice and without Hesitation, to their Comfort, and his own Satisfaction, being then only a little feverish. In this hopeful Condition he went to Bed; but about Midnight he relapsed again into the former Difficulty of Speech: The Fever increasing upon him by Degrees, a Physician by his Prescriptions gave him Relief; and he remembered the *Psalms* which he was wont to repeat, namely, xxxi, xxxii, xxxiv, xli, li, lxiii, cxvi and cxxx. He had always a great Veneration for the Book of *Psalms*, which made him like the reading of *John de Lere*; who writes, how some *Savages* of *Brasil* were wonderfully affected and ravished at the hearing of one of those divine Hymns sung. A certain Person that came to visit him, prayed that God would change his Bed of Sickness to a Bed of Health: He answered, my Bed of Health and Rest will be in *Paradise*. A noble Lady, then a close Prisoner, for whom the sick Person had a high Esteem, having sent to enquire of his Health, he told the Messenger he was very sorry for her Confinement, ordered him to present his Service to the good Lady, and to tell her that he should see her no more but in Heaven.

During this short Interval, his Mind was free to discourse about his domestick Affairs; but in a little Time after his Cough and Fever encreasing violently upon him, his Physician watched with him till Morning. Our Patient perceiving his dangerous Condition, spake in this Manner to him. Sir, tho' all good Christians ought continually to be prepared to die, and tho' God hath granted me the Grace to be ready when he shall please to call me, yet if you find I am drawing to my End, pray give me Notice of it, for I am willing to put my Affairs in Order. About two or three Hours after, the Physician finding he could not live much longer, 'twas judg'd convenient by his Son-in-Law to acquaint him with it; to whom he spake to this Purpose. I find the Time of my Deliverance is drawing near, and that God will take me to his Rest. I shall be glad to discourse with you privately; I have not only looked upon you as my Son-in-Law, but as my Child,

Child, whom I have loved and tenderly love; I recommend my Family to your Care, and desire you all to live in perfect Union. And having given his Blessing to all his Children, as well absent as present, he order'd the private Affairs of his Family, and the Rewards to be given to those that had been serviceable to him in his Sickneſs, and order'd his Son-in-Law to intreat Mr. Girard, the elder of his Church, to carry this Meſſage to the Conſistory of Charenton, that he died their faithful Servant, and pray'd God with all his Heart to preſerve the Church.

After this he ſpent moſt part of his Time in Prayer to God, repeating ſeveral Texts of Scripture, but with ſuch a weak Voice, they could only gueſs by ſome Syllables what he ſaid. He was often heard to repeat the Words of Job, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*; and thoſe of the *Pſalms*, *I have put my Truſt in thee*, &c. *I recommend my Soul into thy Hands*. Thus he continu'd in his pious Meditations. Then his Son-in-Law offer'd to read to him out of his *Book of Conſolations againſt the Fears of Death*, which he attended to, and ſeemed to be well pleaſed with the *Conſolation for a dying Miniſter*, and with the Prayer appointed for ſuch a one who faced Death with a holy Joy. That is (ſaid he) very good: I don't ſpeak it becauſe it came from me: God be praiſed, that he enabled me to publiſh this Book to comfort others and myſelf. The next Morning the 1ſt of November, when Mr. Girard came to viſit him, he repeated to him the ſame Words that he had given to his Son-in-Law in charge to tell him, and delivered to him a Bill to be pray'd for publickly in the Congregation. At that time Mr. Daille, Mr. Morus, and Mr. Claude, came to ſee him, expreſſing their tender Affection and Concernment for him; at which he ſeem'd to be moved. Mr. Daille made a pathetick Exhortation, which the Patient kindly accepted, and ſpeaking of the loſs the Church ſhould ſuſtain by his Death, Mr. Drelincourt answered, *Sir, you are far more uſeful to her than I can be; my Deſire is to depart and to be with Chriſt, which is far better for me*: At which Words Mr. Daille aſkt him, Don't you add with the Apoſtle, that it is more neceſſary for the Church, that you ſhould continue in the Fleſh? He replied *God will raiſe Miniſters who ſhall diſcharge their Duty better than I can*. When Mr. Daille aſked him, whether his Hope was not in the Mercy of God? He answered him in divers Texts of Scripture, ſuch as theſe, *I know in whom I have believed; I have fought the good Fight, I have finiſhed my Courſe, I have kept the Faith, &c. I draw towards the Mark of the Prize of the High Calling, &c.*

Mr. Daille perceiving how painful his Speech was to him, adviſed him to ſpeak to himſelf, to hinder the Increaſe of his Diſtemper; but he answered, *how willing he was to glorify God to the laſt Gasps, and edify by his Speech, ſuch as were there preſent*: Then having embraced each other at their Parting, Mr. Daille told him, he did not altogether deſpair of his Recovery, and that he hoped  
God



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God would save him according to the Prayers of the Church. He reply'd, *The Will of the Lord be done, I resign myself entirely to the Order of his Providence*: The two other Ministers were not wanting in their Prayers and Exhortations. About Noon these Gentlemen left him to his Rest, which he desired then to take; but instead of sleeping, he was heard to pray very earnestly three or four times, and concluded each Prayer with *Our Father*, and *I believe in God*, &c. He gave his Blessing to all his Children, and to them that desir'd it of him. That Afternoon Mr. *Claude* returned to him again, and continu'd till six; our patient answered him distinctly, but briefly, by reason of his great Weakness. About 11 of the Clock at Night, several Physicians came to him; and at their Sight of him they urged, that there was scarce any hopes of him; mean time he was praying and addressing himself to God, but could not well be understood. Yet when a Lady, one of his intimate Friends, came to his Bed-side he said, *Madam, you are Eye Witness of my Groans and Sufferings; but I cannot well speak to you*. And about ten at Night he called to Mind, that a Pledge of some Value had been committed to his keeping, he ordered it to be taken out of his Closet, brought to him, examined if it were all there, and gave Order to restore it to the right Owner.

His second Son, Minister of the reformed Church of *Fountainbleau*, came into the Room to see his dear Father departing, who knew him, and seemed to be moved at the first Sight of him: Mr. *Claude* then askt him if he knew his Son, he answered, *Yes*; this was the last Word he was heard distinctly to speak; his Son assisted his dying Father with his Exhortations and Prayers; he was sensible to the last, his Countenance never changed till about an Hour before he deceased; and tho' Nature was struggling with the Disease, and he tormented with a burning Fever, he seemed by his Looks to be transported with Joy, and full of Comfort. On Sunday the third of November 1669, this Reverend Divine yielded up his Soul to God.

This was the end of this holy and zealous Servant of God, who departed this Life in the 74th Year of his Age, the 52d Year of his Ministry, and in the 50th Year after his being called to serve the reformed Church of *Paris*. He died in the Bed of Honour, in the Exercise of the Duties of his Function, preaching the Gospel, writing in Vindication of the Truth, and comforting the Sick, &c.

The eloquent Tongues of Mr. *Daille* and Mr. *Morus* from the Pulpit of *Charenton*, the Tears of the whole Congregation that Day and the next, when they committed his Body to the Grave in Expectation of a joyful Resurrection, (in a Word, the Commendation of People of both Religions) sufficiently verified the saying of *Solomon*, *The Memory of the Just is blessed*: The Portraiture of his excellent, learned and religious Mind may be seen



# A TABLE

seen in his Works, particularly in this useful and comfortable Treatise, *The Consolations against the Fears of Death.*

We doubt not but he is gone to receive in Heaven the incorruptible Crown of Glory, which the great God and Redeemer of our Souls, promiseth of his Mercy to all faithful Servants; God grant we may imitate his excellent Life, and follow him in his happy End. *Amen.*



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